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Mini skirts, flower power, protest and paranoia... 1968, when the Sixties were really swinging — pages 4, 5

TOMORROW: 10 hot spots for the savvy traveller — Weekend | Get your kicks in the times magazine | Young writers contest: Win a trip to Beijing



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Three-year referendum campaign to decide fate of the pound now begins in earnest

Euro dream transformed into reality

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

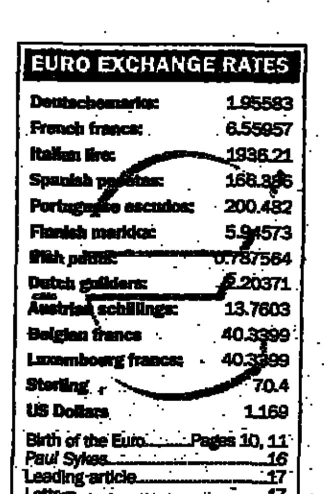
EUROPEAN dreamers finally saw their cherished hope become reality at midnight when 11 countries signed away their sovereignty over monetary policy and the single currency was born.

The birth of the euro was marked in Brussels with a mass balloon launch and toast poured from methuselahs of champagne as ministers spoke of a great moment in history and set their sights on deeper political and economic union.

But there were still sour notes amid the rhetoric, with a public spat between France and Wim Duisenberg over whether he would step down as governor of the European Central Bank in favour of a Frenchman in four years.

Germany used the occasion to fire another warning shot at Britain over the need for "ending unfair competition" and for raising low rates of tax in the EU, while Jacques Santer, the European Commission president, provoked a row by insisting that Britain's eventual membership of the single currency was inevitable.

"As I understand the British Government and the Chancellor, it is not a question of if the UK will join, but when," he told BBC Radio Four's *The World This Weekend*.



EURO EXCHANGE RATES	
Deutschemarks:	1.95583
French francs:	6.55957
Italian lire:	1936.21
Spanish pesetas:	166.386
Portuguese escudos:	200.482
Finnish markkas:	5.94573
Irish punts:	0.787564
Dutch guilders:	2.20371
Austrian schillings:	13.7603
Belgian francs	40.3399
Luxembourg francs:	40.3399
Sterling	70.4
US Dollars	1.169

He also angered Tories by insisting that the euro would lead to further political integration. "I think the euro is not only a factor of economic integration, but also of political integration," he said.

Francis Maude, the Shadow Chancellor, retorted that it was "extremely arrogant and simply wrong" to suggest that membership was inevitable. He said: "Labour is trying to bounce Britain into the euro zone by giving a nod and a wink to European politicians."

In Brussels, the 11 "Euroland" nations were taking what was seen as the most significant leap to that integration since the launch of the Common Market more than 40 years ago by handing power for setting interest rates to the Frankfurt-based ECB. These open at 3 percent.

Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the French minister, set the tone by declaring: "This, December 31, 1998, will be one of the great dates in the history of the 20th century."

Other ministers invoked the history of the moment, by emphasising the dramatic political consequences of their action in creating a currency zone of 290 million people that they said would rival the United States in commercial power. "This is a decisive step towards the ever closer political union of Europe, said Carlo Ciampi of Italy.

Only Charles McCreevy of Ireland acknowledged uncertainty, when he said: "Everybody is joining in an experiment, and with any experiment one cannot say with 100 per cent certitude that it will be an outstanding success," he said. Ireland was worried about the absence of Britain, its main trading partner, he added.

M Strauss Kahn told *The Times* that the "Euro-11" council of finance ministers would rapidly become the "economic government of Europe", setting policy to match the monetary power of the ECB. And Germany, which takes over the EU presidency today, has an ambitious programme for further integration. Werner Muller, the Economy Minister, warned other members that Germany expected rapid moves to more common policies. "The euro requires economic co-operation in Europe. Unfair competition is bad." With Britain clearly in his sights, he added: "National actions at the cost of other member states will endanger our success." The first step must be immediate completion of a code of conduct on business taxation. The code, now under negotiation, is aimed at eliminating "unfair" low-tax regimes.

Britain, which was alone among the 15 EU states in failing to send a minister to the Brussels event, despatched Sir Stephen Wall, its EU ambassador, to wish the project well. The Government was "fully committed to doing all it can to ensure that success," Sir Stephen said.

Although the new notes and coins will not appear for three years, the euro is now the standard currency of Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. Denmark, Sweden, Britain and Greece remain outside. Pesetas, francs, marks and other national currencies become arithmetically awkward sub-divisions, with, for example, one euro being worth 6.69957 French Francs. But in a move aimed at opening competition and cutting costs, euros can immediately used for cheques, bank accounts, credit cards, company accounts and bills and stock market prices.

The fixing of the rates started a frantic weekend for more than 50,000 staff in the City of London and other European financial centres in preparation or switching all trading to euros on Monday.

The launch of the euro also saw the start of the real battle for the pound, with enthusiasts and sceptics firing their first shots in what is likely to be a bitter struggle in the coming years.

Eighteen leading members of the Business for Sterling pressure group write in a letter to *The Times* today that the single currency could exacerbate Europe's economic problems and that while they wish the euro well, they insist that Britain should stay outside. And Paul Sykes, who financed many sceptical MPs in the last election campaign, promises in *The Times* that writes in The Times that anti-European groups would give no quarter in the battle to keep Britain outside. The euro would "fatally undermine the legitimacy of our domestic democratic institutions," he writes.

But Sir Leon Brittan, vice-chairman of the European Commission, predicted that Britain would join in three years' time when people realised they were missing out on the advantages of the euro. "Britain shouldn't be left behind," he said, while Lord Howe of Aberavon urged Tony Blair to "take risks" and set a date for joining.



BENOIT DOPPAGNE Reuters

Children waiting for the launch of 3,000 balloons to mark the launch of the euro in Brussels yesterday. The grown-ups drank champagne

Carey pleads for refugees

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, is to make an appeal today for greater public understanding of the world's 50 million refugees forced from their homes by war, natural disaster or persecution.

In his message, on BBC1 this morning, the Archbishop will criticise the British media for "whipping up" fear and hostility against the 50,000 asylum seekers in this country........Page 2

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Et tu Brutus? Jenkins was ready to ban French wines

BY ADRIAN LEE AND JAMES LANDALE

LORD JENKINS of Hillhead admitted yesterday that in 1968 he was the architect of a secret Labour plan, code-named Brutus, to ban foreign holidays and stop luxury imports. French wine, Swiss watches, avocados and out-of-season strawberries were are on the list to save the economy.

Lord Jenkins, then the Labour Chancellor, and not unknown for his love of claret, drew up the contingency scheme in such secrecy that only Harold Wilson, the Prime Minister, and a handful of Cabinet ministers were aware of its existence.

Despite devaluation in 1967, the pound was still under pressure in March 1968 after two months of poor trade figures. The Government was desperate to avoid a second devaluation which would have jeopardised its future but had few currency reserves to support sterling. The existence of Brutus, which was never implemented, is revealed today in Cabinet papers released from the Public Record Office under the 30-year rule. The 18-page plan was drafted eight times by a small group of trusted economic advisers and ready by the summer of 1968 to be implemented within a week in the event of a "major external cataclysm" such as the gold crisis of earlier that year.



Jenkins: emergency plan to save the economy

The documents reveal that Brutus could also have been implemented if two further poor sets of balance of payments figures were published. It would also have seen banks closed for four days, and sterling assets held by foreign countries blocked. Wages were to have been frozen, embassy staff pared and defence and foreign-aid spending cut.

A less severe alternative involved setting quotas to limit the import of items such as cut flowers, jam, beers, chocolate and stockings. It was estimated that the move would save Britain £910 million in 1969.

Wilson and his colleagues agonised over the inclusion of tinned salmon on the list. According to one paper, although savings of £8.7 million would be made "a shortage would be unpopular particularly in the North of England where it is a traditional high tea food". Similarly, quotas on tinned fruit could damage the Australian economy.

Lord Jenkins, now a senior Liberal Democrat, said yesterday that the plans were very much his "baby". He said: "They were drawn up in the Treasury. Harold Wilson was in a very supine mood at that time."

Asked about the potential impact on his reputation of banning goods such as avocados, he dismissed the question as "trivial". He said: "It would have been very foolish if you didn't plan for worst cases."

The 1968 files, pages 4, 5

Hostages furious at delays

SURVIVORS of the Yemen hostage crisis criticised ministers yesterday for failing to send an RAF aircraft to bring them home swiftly.

Their journey to Britain will be in three stages: a flight from Aden to Sanaa in North Yemen, a Yemen Airways flight to Paris, and then, after a three-hour wait, a British Airways connection to Gatwick.

The Foreign Office in London yesterday summoned Yemen's Ambassador to demand an explanation for the siege, in which three Britons and an Australian died.

One of the freed men, David Holmes, said: "I have had enough of this farce. Why haven't our government done more?" Laurence Whitehouse, whose wife Margaret died in the shootout, said: "We are sick of being shuffled around."

Yemen 'whitewash', page 9

Happy MDCCCCLXXXXVIIII. Or is it?

BY GILES WHITTELL

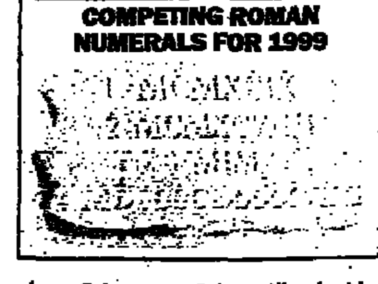
WELCOME to the year MIM, as the Emperor Flavius might have said. Then again, he might have preferred to wish his subjects a happy new MCMXCIX. Or should that be MCMXCVIIII?

We have no idea, but some guidance from the ancients would have been useful; 23 centuries after the invention of Roman numerals, confusion reigns as to how they should be used to indicate the year 1999. The Year 1999 Problem has left architects dithering over how to inscribe their cornerstones and film studios in a quandary over the dating of their new releases.

Using the Romans' system of numerals in its simplest form, the year that begins today is MDCCCCLXXXXVIIII — enough to make a stone-mason change trades. Instead, short-cuts were devised, the best-known of which is simple subtraction — the system by which IX equals nine and XIX is 19.

For modern scholars, however, subtraction adds a problem. Roman numerals were based, some say, on signs people used to count with their fingers. With no single inventor to etch in stone a manual for their proper use, it remains unclear when, if ever, subtraction was acceptable for formal dating.

Paul Lewis, a London book collector, says the figures XL, or 50 minus 10, or 40, were found among the ruins of Flavius's Colosseum. Others, like the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Washington, which has been assigned the Year 1999 problem by the US Government, claim subtraction is largely a 19th-century convenience.



Dr Peter Jones, the classical scholar, said: "It's fascinating. The fact is that the notation can be either additive or subtractive. Both methods are employed, sometimes in the same document. There is no consistency about it.

"On official documents like inscriptions, however, there seems to be a preference for the additive method. In other words we find, for example, IIII rather than IV. If you are drawing up an official document then the Romans would have preferred the additive method MDCCCCLXXXXVIIII."

So, best wishes it is for MDCCCCLXXXXVIIII.

Leading article, page 17

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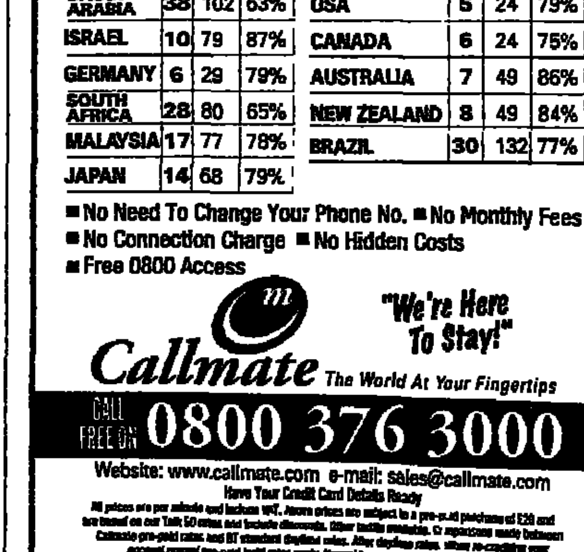
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ITALY	8	36	78%	NETHERLANDS	7	29	76%
CHINA	27	109	75%	SPAIN	11	36	69%
SAUDI ARABIA	38	102	63%	USA	5	24	79%
ISRAEL	10	79	87%	CANADA	6	24	75%
GERMANY	6	29	79%	AUSTRALIA	7	49	86%
SOUTH AFRICA	28	80	65%	NEW ZEALAND	8	49	84%
MALAYSIA	17	77	78%	BRAZIL	30	132	77%
JAPAN	14	68	79%				



Embrace the refugees, says Archbishop

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN
SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, will today appeal for greater public understanding of the 50 million refugees throughout the world, uprooted from their homes by persecution, war or natural disaster.

In his annual new-year message, to be broadcast at 12.30pm on BBC1 today, Dr Carey criticises the media in Britain for whipping up "fear and hostility" against the 50,000 or so asylum-seekers in this country and suggests it is wrong to think of them merely as welfare "scroungers".

"The presence of strangers can make us nervous or even angry. But people don't readily uproot themselves from all that is familiar — choosing to leave homeland, family and friends is probably the most painful decision they will ever have to make," he says.

Dr Carey points out that the baby Jesus, whose family was forced to flee to Egypt shortly after his birth, is probably history's best-known refugee. He adds that some of the great names of our century have been refugees, including Albert Einstein, the Jewish mathematical physicist who left Germany for the United States following Hitler's rise to power in 1934; Marc Chagall, the Jewish painter who left Russia for France in 1922, and the German actress Marlene Dietrich, who settled in the United States.



Marlene Dietrich: one of most famous refugees

The Archbishop's speech was inspired by a meeting he had earlier this week with two Romany children from Slovakia: Tina, 9, and Puckie, 6, who are seeking asylum in Britain with their parents. The family left their homeland two years ago as a result of growing discrimination against Romanies.

Once in Britain the family faced further hostility and were forced to move to a different town after a brick was thrown through the window of their home.

Drawing on the Christian theme of hospitality to strangers, Dr Carey stresses the importance of providing both a material and spiritual home for everybody.

"While we hope and pray that Tina and Puckie and other refugees may find a place they may call home, each of us is a spiritual refugee travelling through life, looking for the one of whom it is said in the Scripture: 'The Eternal God is your refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.' That is where we can all find a place called home," he says.

His speech comes amid growing political and public concern over what to do about the thousands of refugees coming into Britain each year. More than 45,000 refugees are now seeking asylum in the UK, most in London and the South East, with a continuing influx from war-torn Kosovo and Albania. The Home Office has already admitted that it is facing the biggest immigration crisis in a decade.

Local authorities are obliged to look after asylum-seekers who arrive on their doorstep. South East England has been most hard-pressed because many arrive at London's airports or the Channel ports.

Refugees can choose any local authority to ask for help. They are usually accommodated in bed-and-breakfast or cheap rented flats. Single adults are only entitled to food vouchers and shelter under the National Assistance Act 1948 which requires councils to help the destitute. They cannot be given cash.

SUCCESS SPRUNG FROM PERSECUTION

Ben Elton: comedian. Grandfather Victor Ehrenberg was eminent historian and a refugee from Czechoslovakia.

The Fugees: rap group. Two members who are also solo artists — Wyclef Jean and Pras Michel — are both from Haiti.

Lord (Lew) Grade: Jewish Russian refugee. TV mogul with brother Leslie. Until his death last month was chairman of the Grade Co and ITC entertainment. Michael, son of Leslie Grade, is former controller of BBC1 and chief executive of Channel 4. Now chairman of First Leisure.

Lord (Paul) Hamlyn: publishing tycoon and patron of the arts. Came from Germany as a six-year-old refugee.

Margaret Hodge, MP: father was a refugee from Nazi Germany.

Sir Richard Rogers: architect. Mother was refugee from Trieste in 1938.

Lord (Maurice) and Charles Saatchi: advertising tycoons. Sons of Iranian Jewish refugee textile merchant.

Tanya Sarne: fashion designer and creator of Ghost label. Father was a Russian refugee who fled to London in 1939.

Sir Georg Solti: conductor. Was director of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in the 1960s and went on to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Born in Budapest, he was a refugee from the Nazi regime.

Christopher Wreh: footballer, plays for Arsenal. He escaped to France from Liberia when he was 14.

Alek Wek: model from Sudan. When she was 14, her family were forced to flee after a military coup.



Seconds out: Brian Tipper cleaning the face of Big Ben's clock yesterday ready for the new year chimes. The mechanism was adjusted to add a second to the last minute of 1998, to keep time with atomic clocks

Prescott seeks to counter image of strife

BY ROLAND WATSON

JOHN PRESCOTT insisted yesterday he was "fully on board" Tony Blair's modernising crusade as he tried to counter the impression of a Cabinet riven by power struggles after Peter Mandelson's departure.

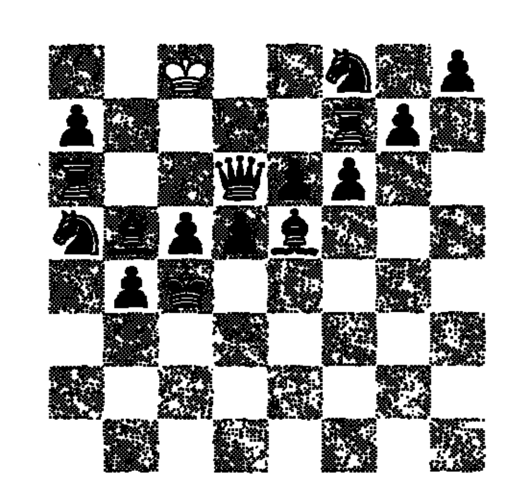
But the Deputy Prime Minister gave the clearest indication yet that he believed the Prime Minister's policy of working with the Liberal Democrats had gone far enough. He used the past tense when asked about further areas of co-operation. He said he fully supported cross-party efforts on devolution. But he added: "What we carried out was in the manifesto and what the Prime Minister put forward." His comments provided the strongest sign that Mr Prescott would oppose any moves to offer Paddy Ashdown a Cabinet post.

Mr Prescott insisted he was behind the Government's legislative proposals and dismissed reports of rifts at the top of the Cabinet as "prattle". He told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme: "We are a modernising government. There is a new Labour Government that has produced a radical programme that we can be really proud of, and I am very supportive of all those measures."

With Mr Blair abroad, Mr Prescott had previously used a newspaper interview to say that he and the Chancellor had agreed on a more interventionist approach to the economy. The Left used his embrace of "the Keynesian way" to demand that traditional Labour values return to the heart of policy making. But yesterday he tried to calm the jostling for influence that has followed Mr Mandelson's resignation, denying that he was taking advantage of Mr Blair's absence to flex his muscles.

Downing Street sources said No 10 was relaxed about Mr Prescott's earlier comments, which they said had been designed to show that claims of a feud between Mr Prescott and Mr Brown were untrue. The sources added that his views on co-operation with the Liberal Democrats were well known, and similar to those of some other ministers.

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Tories call for more studies of GM crops

BY MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

THE Tories yesterday called for a delay of at least three years on the commercial growing of genetically modified crops to allow time for more research into their safety.

Tim Yeo, the Shadow Agriculture Minister, said that widespread anxieties about such crops needed to be allayed if their potentially significant benefits for future food production were to be realised. Commercial planting should be postponed for at least the rest of this Parliament, Mr Yeo said, by which time a number of government-commissioned studies on the environmental impact of genetically modified crops would have been completed.

"We will have a lot more information by then and the position could be reviewed," he said. There is a very strong argument for somewhat more caution than the Government has so far shown and very little to be lost by slowing down a bit."

He added: "Many environmental groups have called for a moratorium for up to three years to ensure a proper examination of the impact of genetically modified organisms on the British countryside.

"The Labour Government's attitude to this is not clear but the case for delay has been strengthened by their failure to provide full details of their own testing.

"Against this background I believe the commercial release of such crops should be delayed until the results of government-commissioned studies on the impact of genetically modified crops are available," he said.

In October the Government announced that it had reached a voluntary agreement with the plant-breeding industry for a delay of at least three years in the commercial growing of any crops genetically engineered to be resistant to insect pests.



Yeo: wants moratorium on planting new crops

Hague enlists rank-and-file help on policy

BY ROLAND WATSON, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

RANK-and-file Tories will for the first time be given direct input into policymaking in what William Hague yesterday described as a year of fundamental change for his party.

Mr Hague said that 1999 had to be the "year of ideas", new thinking and fresh language, and announced a radical overhaul of policies to put the Tories "back on the electoral map".

A new mechanism for policy-making will give party activists, outside experts and backbench MPs a say in the direction of the party. The aim is to broaden the appeal of policies and try to ensure they are guaranteed a high degree of popular support before they are sprung on voters.

Shadow cabinet ministers are to head new "policy agenda groups" covering issues ranging from health, welfare and education to agriculture, local government and the economy. They will be expected to discuss policy with outside experts, including academics and those at the sharp end in each field, along with members of the party's rank and file and backbench MPs.

The groups will use the preliminary results of the party's Listening to Britain campaign as their starting point, and will be encouraged to commission further research. The initial proposals will be pulled together in an Agenda for Britain, which will be published and debated by the party later in the year.

Although Tories will deny that they are resorting to the "focus group" approach adopted by Labour before the last election, the development means that policies will be tested to a far greater degree before they are unveiled.

The details came in a letter from Mr Hague to local constituency party chairmen, delivered as he spent his winter holiday in Montana.

Mr Hague said that the party could not simply rely on the Government and the Liberal Democrats to make mistakes. "We need to develop a fresh, positive and compassionate Conservative agenda for the next century. That means a thorough overhaul of all our policies," he said.

In his letter, Mr Hague said: "Each time our great party has been in opposition, we have turned misfortune to our advantage and developed the new thinking that has taken a new generation of Conservatives back into government. Now it falls to us to begin that process again."

Motorists warned of fuel 'scam'

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

MINISTERS are to issue warnings to prevent a multimillion-pound "scam" misleading motorists into having their car engines converted unnecessarily.

About six million motorists will be unable to buy leaded petrol for their cars from January 2000, when a European Union ban comes into force. Ministers are worried that unscrupulous garage mechanics will try to persuade drivers to pay up to £500 to have their engines converted to run on unleaded petrol, when many will do so without a conversion.

A national information campaign will be mounted this month in garages, service stations and MoT testing centres, telling motorists to beware of those pressing them to have expensive conversions.

Up to three-and-a-half million cars running on leaded petrol will be able to switch to unleaded without any changes. Other engines will need adjustments to their ignition timing.

Motorists driving an estimated 2.3 million cars whose engines could be harmed by unleaded petrol will be able to buy "lead replacement petrol" from the autumn, as leaded petrol is phased out. The petrol contains additional lubricant to reduce engine wear.

The information campaign will stress that motorists should seek advice from motoring organisations, car manufacturers or petrol retailers on the best alternative to leaded petrol.

The ban on leaded fuel, which has been in force in many European countries for several years, is intended to reduce pollution. But the Treasury will lose about £500 million a year from the higher rates of duty charged on four-star leaded petrol, which costs about 6 pence a litre more than unleaded petrol.

Ministers concede that it is unlikely that this money could be recouped from motorists, who already face a 9 per cent increase in duty, equivalent to about 5p per litre this year.

Avalanche survivors tell of lonely wait for rescuers


Sarah Finch and Steven Newton: lost contact in snow

BY GILLIAN HARRIS AND STEPHEN FARRELL

THE young couple buried beneath an avalanche in the Highlands yesterday told how they lay unable to move for 16 hours, not knowing if the other was alive or dead.

Sarah Finch, 25, and her boyfriend, Steven Newton, 24, from Dartford, Kent, were recovering from mild hypothermia in Fort William yesterday. Four friends died in the avalanche on Aonach Mor on Tuesday. Their guide, Roger Wild, survived.

Miss Finch said their group of Venture Scout leaders had stopped 2,000ft up the mountain while the guide checked the route ahead. "The snow came from behind us. It knocked us off our feet and then what seemed to be a second wave of snow covered our heads. The next thing I remember is being trapped in almost a block of ice with just a small little space which I dug out to breathe.

"As far as I could remember I was shouting all night but the rescue team said I was so deep that even when they were digging me out they couldn't hear me. I heard somebody shouting. I didn't know who it was, but I now know it was Steve. I heard Roger shouting right at the very end when the rescue team was digging us out."

For Mr Newton it was the second lucky escape. In 1990 his sailing boat went missing for 24 hours at sea in a storm, prompting his parents last night to say that he had led a "charmed life".

Describing the avalanche, he said: "I remember waking up and not being able to move any of my limbs; panicking because I am claustrophobic and I had snow all around me in a tiny space. I thrashed my head around and managed to enlarge the space, and throughout the night I slowly managed to get one arm out and then the other.

"I found an ice axe in the snow which I used to try and dig my way out. Towards the end of the night I managed to get a hole to the surface and tried to drag myself out but my feet were trapped. I couldn't get my feet loose at all. I tried shouting during the night and I did hear a female voice. I couldn't decide if it was Sarah."

Mr Newton said: "I was overwhelmed at getting out, not having known if there would be another wave of snow coming down while I was trapped there. It was so frustrating at the time as I had dug my way to the surface and just could not get out to start digging for other people. I just had to lie there and wait."

Asked if he would embark on a similar exercise again, he said: "It will take quite a while to come to terms with what has happened and the loss of our good friends."

The three survivors were expected to spend one more night in hospital. Miss Finch, an embryologist, suffered injuries to her elbow, leg, ankle and a finger and Mr Newton, a transmissions engineer, injured his left foot.

Brian Tregaskis, a consultant physician at Fort William Hospital, said: "They are extremely lucky individuals. Their physical injuries are at a minimum."

Mr Wild said in a statement: "My main thoughts are with the bereaved families. I am very pleased that two of the group have survived and would like to thank the rescue team and the medical services for their prompt and professional actions, which undoubtedly saved our lives."

Father tells of vain fight to save sea boy

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES

A FATHER told yesterday of how he fought for 3½ hours to keep his nine-year-old son alive in icy waters after their boat sank during their first fishing trip together, only for the boy to die at hospital.

Jonathan Vowles and two friends sang and cuddled the boy, Lewis, while they trod water, waiting to be rescued. Despite their efforts, Lewis slipped in and out of consciousness and died in hospital of hypothermia.

Mr Vowles, 35, told his family from his hospital bed: "We did everything we could. The water was very cold and we knew we had to keep Lewis awake.

"I hugged and cuddled him and we took it in turns to lift him clear of the water. We sang songs to him and whenever he looked like falling asleep we shook him and slapped his face to keep him awake."

Mr Vowles had bought his son a fishing rod for Christmas and had promised to take him out to sea. The boy, who lived with his mother and elder sister in Brighton, had spent Christmas with his father and his second wife at their home at Tonyrefail in south Wales.

His grandfather, Harry Vowles, said yesterday: "Lewis had been looking forward to it all over Christmas and could talk about nothing else."


Lewis Vowles: died on his first fishing trip

Lewis and his father set off on their expedition as soon as the weather improved after Christmas. They made the 20-mile trip to the harbour at Penarth, near Cardiff, with their friends, Steve Buck, 19, and Kevin Gardner, 32, the owner of their 16-foot boat Helen Marie.

The party had been fishing for four hours when Mr Vowles rang his wife, Jane, on his mobile phone to say they were calling it a day.

Mr Vowles said: "Five minutes later a hole suddenly appeared in the boat as if we had struck something. The boat sank so quickly we couldn't get off an emergency flare."

The three men and the boy, all of whom were wearing life-jackets, scrambled out of the boat as it went down two miles offshore in an area known as the Newport Deeps. They blew whistles as two tankers passed nearby, but the ships failed to see them. They had been in the water for almost four hours when they were heard by the crew of another tanker, The Astir, which was waiting for a pilot to guide it into Newport.

The group were picked up by an inshore lifeboat, then winched aboard an RAF helicopter. Lewis was unconscious when he was taken to Cardiff Royal Infirmary. His father and friends were treated for hypothermia at the University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff.

Coastguards said that the group was well equipped with life-jackets and whistles, but that the slightly built nine-year-old stood little chance in such cold water.

A report on the accident is being compiled for the Cardiff Coroner Dr Lawrence Addicott, and an inquiry by the Marine Accident Investigation Bureau is also under way.

Chief Inspector Paul Kemp, of South Wales Police, described the accident as "tragic".

"We are still trying to recover the boat from the waters to examine it to discover how it capsized," he said.

MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS


After: at a trim 9st 3lb, Mrs Miles can now go clothes shopping with her daughter


Before: Beverley Miles weighed in at 24st 11lb

Fear of death led woman to lose 15st

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

BEVERLEY MILES is an inspiration to anyone resolving to slim down to a fighting weight in the new year. She has lost 15 stone in two years.

The 35-year-old mother from Great Sankey, Cheshire, once weighed 25 stone and shopped for clothes in the 32-plus range. Now she is officially a size 10 — petite.

Mrs Miles has enjoyed the most dramatic weight loss among five finalists in the Slimming magazine slimmer of the year award.

She said: "I feel literally that I have been given a second chance at life. The quality of my life has improved tremendously. I can now go to aerobic classes with my 15-year-old daughter Tina and shop for clothes in the same store.

"Two years ago it was very different. At almost 15 stone overweight, it is no surprise I constantly thought about dying."

Mrs Miles, who is only 5ft 4in tall, weighed 24st 11lb. Now she tips the scales at a trim 9st 3lb.



Saggy cat gives rivals a stuffing

BAGPUSS, the saggy old cloth cat, has been declared the all-time favourite children's programme in a national poll.

More than 40,000 BBC viewers cast their votes by post, telephone or e-mail to affirm their love for the cuddly pink and yellow striped cat, ahead of shows including The Magic Roundabout, Bill and Ben and Play School.

Bagpuss made his debut in 1974 as part of Watch With Mother. Only 13 episodes were made by Smallfilms, which also made Noggin the Nog. Bagpuss told stories with friends including Professor Yaffle the woodpecker and the mice from the Mouse Organ.

Lorraine Heggessey, head of BBC Children's Production, said: "It is always programmes we watched when we were youngest that have a special place in our hearts. Bagpuss is a favourite with today's twenty-somethings and it's great to see that they are just as keen to wallow in nostalgia as the rest of us." Bagpuss will be declared the winner on BBC1 today during Are You Sitting Comfortably?, a tribute to children's programmes.


Bagpuss's career lasted for only 13 episodes

□ The video for Michael Jackson's 1983 hit Thriller, in which he became a werewolf, has been voted best pop video of all time. Nearly 100,000 people voted in the poll, held by the cable television channel VH1.

Cartoon ties the limit for business women

BY JOANNA BALE

MEN who wear ties decorated with pictures of cartoon characters may think they are expressing a wacky sense of humour but to their women colleagues they denote immaturity and bad taste.

According to a survey of 300 women delegates at conference centres around Britain, a knot of pure silk with a subtle geometric pattern is far preferable to a garish slash of stain-resistant polyester featuring novelty sheep.

Top of the hate list were Disney characters such as Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, followed by the comic book hero Dennis the Menace and the animated Plasticine duo Wallace and Gromit.

A resounding 81 per cent of the female managers surveyed said choice of tie was an important factor when it came to making first impressions with clients, while 74 per cent said unsuitable appearance at work would lessen chances of promotion.


Knotty problem: women were unimpressed

In spite of their dubious merits, novelty ties continue to be big sellers in thousands of stores, from the high street retail chain Tie Rack to the designer emporium Hermes.

The department store John Lewis found them to be such a money-spinner that they commissioned an extensive range under their own brand Jonelle featuring animals such as pigs, flamingoes, and tortoises, and a selection of vegetables, priced at £12.50. A spokeswoman said: "They sell very well, particularly in our London stores. There are obviously thousands of men out there who love to brighten up their suits with them."

The French designer Hermes, which makes silk ties featuring animals and trees for a cool £65, also declared them to be top sellers. Fabienne Kozel at the New Bond Street store in London said: "Last year was our Year of Africa, so we had ties featuring animals such as elephants, giraffes and zebras, which were top sellers.

"This year is the Year of the Tree, so we have trees, which are also popular. Next year is the Year of the Galaxy, so we will have moons and stars. They are nothing like cartoon ties — they are very recognisable as Hermes."

Explosives used to recover body

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES

THE body of a potholer trapped underground for more than 17 hours was recovered yesterday.

Peter Fowler, 45, an experienced caver, collapsed unconscious in a narrow passage about 50ft down. Twenty volunteers, including mine rescue teams, police divers and fire crews, worked through the night in an attempt to bring him to the surface.

Explosives were used to widen the narrow gap to reach Mr Fowler, who could be seen by rescuers, while cavers used hand chisels to chip away rocks. They worked on even when it was clear that the man had died.

Mr Fowler and another potholer had been exploring caves above the River Taff near Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales when Mr Fowler blacked out.

His fellow caver went to the surface to raise the alarm.


Peter Fowler: blacked out in narrow tunnel

West Brecon cave rescue team member, Gary Evans, said: "We had to use every method we could think of because there was very little room to move and conditions were extremely muddy."

A post-mortem examination is to be carried out next week by a Home Office pathologist, although police suspect he died from natural causes.

Man killed at son's wedding

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

A BRIDEGROOM'S father was hit and killed by a car as he videotaped his son's wedding reception in the village of Over Alderley, Cheshire.

David Swift, 54, a retired lecturer, from Witley, Surrey, was trying to find a good angle from which to film his son Robert, 25, and his bride, Rebecca, 28, leave for their honeymoon. He stepped back into the Macclesfield Road with the camera to his eye as the wedding party emerged from a restaurant, and was hit by a car.

More than 20 guests, including his wife, Jane, saw the accident. One of the wedding party, a nurse, and a passing paramedic tried to administer first aid but Mr Swift was pronounced dead on arrival at the Macclesfield District General Hospital.

Inspector Paul Jennings, of Cheshire police, said that no charges had been laid over the accident.

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Brown letter drove Wilson to 17 drafts

Newly released papers throw light on Labour's troubles 30 years ago. Reports by Valerie Elliott

HAROLD WILSON was so bitter about the way George Brown quit his Government that it took 17 drafts before he could agree the traditional prime ministerial letter produced when ministers resign.

A document released today under the 30-year rule shows the many deletions and hesitations by Wilson about what he could properly say about his former Foreign Secretary.

Animosity had been building between the two and, amid a gold and sterling crisis, the final straw for Brown was the discovery that he had been excluded from a Privy Council meeting on the night of March 14, 1968, that agreed to order an immediate bank holiday to stem losses in gold and to freeze dealings on the foreign exchanges. News of the meeting, held at Buckingham Palace, reached Brown at the Commons: he met colleagues to discuss the development.

Wilson was furious that Brown had held such "an irregular meeting" outside the Cabinet. An emergency Cabinet was called at 1.15am.

Cabinet committee minutes released today show that Wilson in vain emphasised to Brown that he had tried to contact him for over an hour by telephone. In the end the meeting had gone ahead with just the Prime Minister, Roy Jenkins, the Chancellor, and Peter Shore, Economic Affairs Secretary, who made up a quorum.

The secret conclave incensed Brown, who believed it was symptomatic of Wilson's style of government.

Anthony Crosland, President of the Board of Trade, also objected, saying that other economic ministers should have been included. Shore accepted that the episode showed the secrecy of the Treasury.

Brown would not allow the discussion to move on and insisted he had never been out of telephone reach. He accused Wilson of handling the crisis "with great arrogance".

But Wilson defended his action, saying the full economic picture had not been made clear to him until 11pm. Brown hit back that Wilson and Jenkins "had acted by themselves and on their own authority".

Michael Stewart, then First Secretary of State, rebuked Brown and Crosland and said the situation "was too serious for ministers to waste time arguing about procedure".

Brown, however, was baited: he was adamant he had not been telephoned and accused Wison of "trying to cover up a monumental muddle".


Wilson: row over emergency meeting

He then departed from the Cabinet. Crosland said that nobody could blame him for his action but Wilson found it unacceptable that Brown had doubted his word about attempts to contact him.

Brown, who had long been threatening to quit, wanted his exit to be memorable. In his resignation letter he publicly criticised Wilson's style of government: "The events of last night and this morning have brought to a head a really serious issue which has, as you know, been troubling me for some time. It is, in short, the way the Government is run and the manner in which we reach our decisions."

Wilson was angry that a colleague should behave like this in such a crisis, and decided to challenge Brown's version of events. A first draft of his reply read: "I cannot agree that the events . . . justify the general conclusion you seek to draw from them."

He also suggested that other Cabinet ministers were "unanimous" with the decisions taken. But, given that four of the Cabinet had expressed concern, Wilson deleted the line.

Further attempts were more conciliatory: "You refer to the events of last night. As you know the most strenuous efforts were made to get in touch with you at a critical phase so that you could be brought fully into the picture." Again Wilson had second thoughts, crossed out "most strenuous efforts" and wrote "I tried unsuccessfully to get in touch with you."

Yet this was clearly too personal for Wilson after the manner of Brown's departure. In the end he wrote: "unsuccessful efforts were made to get in touch with you".

In an early version he also wrote: "It is a matter of great regret to me that you now feel unable to continue in the Government." But he authorised a subtle change. "I am sorry that your feelings about what happened last night have made you decide that you cannot continue to hold office in the Government."

Wilson even hesitated over whether to praise Brown for "his great contribution" to the Government. In one version the words are crossed out, but they appear in the final draft.


George Brown, for whom the euphemism "tired and emotional" was coined

Memories are made of this

1968 WAS THE YEAR THAT...
- ☐ Labour's "I'm backing Britain" campaign took off
- ☐ Common Market countries removed last customs barriers.
- ☐ Seven-sided 50p coin replaced ten shilling note.
- ☐ Sir Leane Constantine became first black life peer
- ☐ Richard Nixon elected President of United States.
- ☐ The Beatles set up Apple boutique, a £100,000 psychedelic shop in London's West End.
- ☐ New legislation stemmed flow of Asian immigrants from East Africa.
- ☐ Violent anti-Vietnam War demonstrations in London.
- ☐ Southeast England hit by worst floods since 1953.
- ☐ Two-tier post introduced: first class and second class
- ☐ First British heart transplant at National Heart Hospital, Marylebone, by team led by Donald Ross.
- ☐ Reggie and Ronnie Kray arrested.
- ☐ Jackie Kennedy became Jackie Onassis.
- ☐ Miniskirt reached such heights that cleaners charged by the inch.

Wade: historic win at the US Open

AND IN THE ARTS...
- ☐ Cecil Day Lewis became Poet Laureate, a post vacant since death of John Masefield in 1967.
- ☐ The musical *Hair* premiered in Britain, after abolition of stage censorship by the Lord Chamberlain
- ☐ *The Forsyte Saga* drew huge audiences for the new BBC2.
- ☐ *Till Death Do Us Part* (BBC) was the most popular television show with 15.1 million viewers.
- ☐ At the Oscars, Katharine Hepburn (*The Lion in Winter*) and Barbra Streisand (*Funny Girl*) shared the best actress award. *Oliver!* was best film.
- ☐ Alexander Solzhenitsyn's novels smuggled out of Russia.
- ☐ Best-selling albums included *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, *Delilah* by Tom Jones, *Ogden's Nut Gone Flake* by the Small Faces, *Val Doonican Rocks Me Gently*, *The Sound of Music*, *Bookends* by Simon and Garfunkel, and *Love Andy* by Andy Williams.

SPORT
- ☐ Britain won five gold medals at the Olympic Games in Mexico.
- ☐ England and Yorkshire fast bowler "fiery" Fred Trueman announced his retirement.
- ☐ Virginia Wade beat Billie Jean King to become first British woman to win US Open.
- ☐ Tony Jacklin became first English golfer to win a tournament on the US tour — the Jacksonville Open — for more than 20 years.


Armstrong: shy about retiring

QUOTES OF THE YEAR ☐ "I shall not seek and I will not accept the nomination of my party as President." Lyndon Johnson
- ☐ "As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding. Like the Roman, I seem to see 'the River Tiber foaming with much blood'." Enoch Powell
- ☐ "Musicians don't retire: they stop when there is no more music in them." Louis Armstrong
- ☐ "It is unbecoming for a cardinal to ski badly." Pope John Paul II
- ☐ "Let us begin by committing ourselves to the truth; to see it like it is and to tell it like it is, to find the truth, to speak the truth and live with the truth. That's what we'll do." Richard Nixon's acceptance speech for presidential nomination

ARRIVALS
- ☐ Lisa Marie Presley
- ☐ Jay Kay
- ☐ David Batty
- ☐ Damon Albarn
- ☐ Jason Donovan and Kylie Minogue

DEPARTURES
- ☐ Robert Kennedy
- ☐ Enid Blyton
- ☐ Martin Luther King
- ☐ Yuri Gagarin
- ☐ John Steinbeck
- ☐ Bud Flanagan

Minister quit over 'that bitch' Barbara Castle

DETAILS of the resignation of Ray Gunter, Harold Wilson's minister of power, reveal extraordinary tensions and class warfare that were rife inside the Cabinet.

Mr Gunter quit as a minister in a late-night telephone call to Mr Wilson at Chequers, claiming he could not stand "the middle-class bastards" inside the Cabinet.

His main target however was "that bitch" Barbara — now Baroness — Castle who had been given a version of his old job as Minister for Labour in a reshuffle three months before. He could not understand why she had landed his job and clearly resentment had built up. Last night Lady Castle was not available to comment on the acrimony.

Mr Gunter, one of the lesser-known ministers of the Wilson era, spoke frankly to the PM in a highly emotional call at 11pm on June 29 which was listened into and noted by the Downing Street Duty Clerk. The nature of his bitterness is recorded for the first time in new files at the public record office.

Mr Gunter told Wilson he was walking out of the Government "to fight against the bloody middle class and intellectuals within the Cabinet".

A South Wales valleys boy with strong union links — he was the only minister on strike in 1966 — he hated the government's approach to the Nationalised Industries and Labour relations generally. Still hankering after his old job, he did not think Mrs Castle was doing it properly and he "could not stomach this".

His mood had no doubt blackened throughout the day. He had tried to resign at 10am that morning but Wilson refused to accept it. But conversing through the duty clerk, he was adamant he would not stay on in the post and refused to go and see the Prime Minister at Chequers.

The duty clerk recorded that Gunter spoke "in a brusque, almost strangled voice".

Wilson asked if they could remain personal friends but Gunter said there was no friendship. He accused Wilson of destroying the Ministry of Labour and of destroying him, of "kicking him hard" and of suspecting him of leaks. "You suspect me! Torture me!" he railed and said he wanted to know why he had been kicked out of his job.

Gunter said he intended "going back to the people whence I came", adding "where the miners are, the shunters are and the railwaymen are, that is where I am". Wilson told him to have a stiff drink and sleep on it but he resigned the next day.

Publicly Gunter made no reference of his disagreement with Wilson but he told reporters "they will be asking who the hell I am in ten years' time."

Gunter resented his job going to Castle in Cabinet shuffle

Plus ça change in politics

By Philip Howard

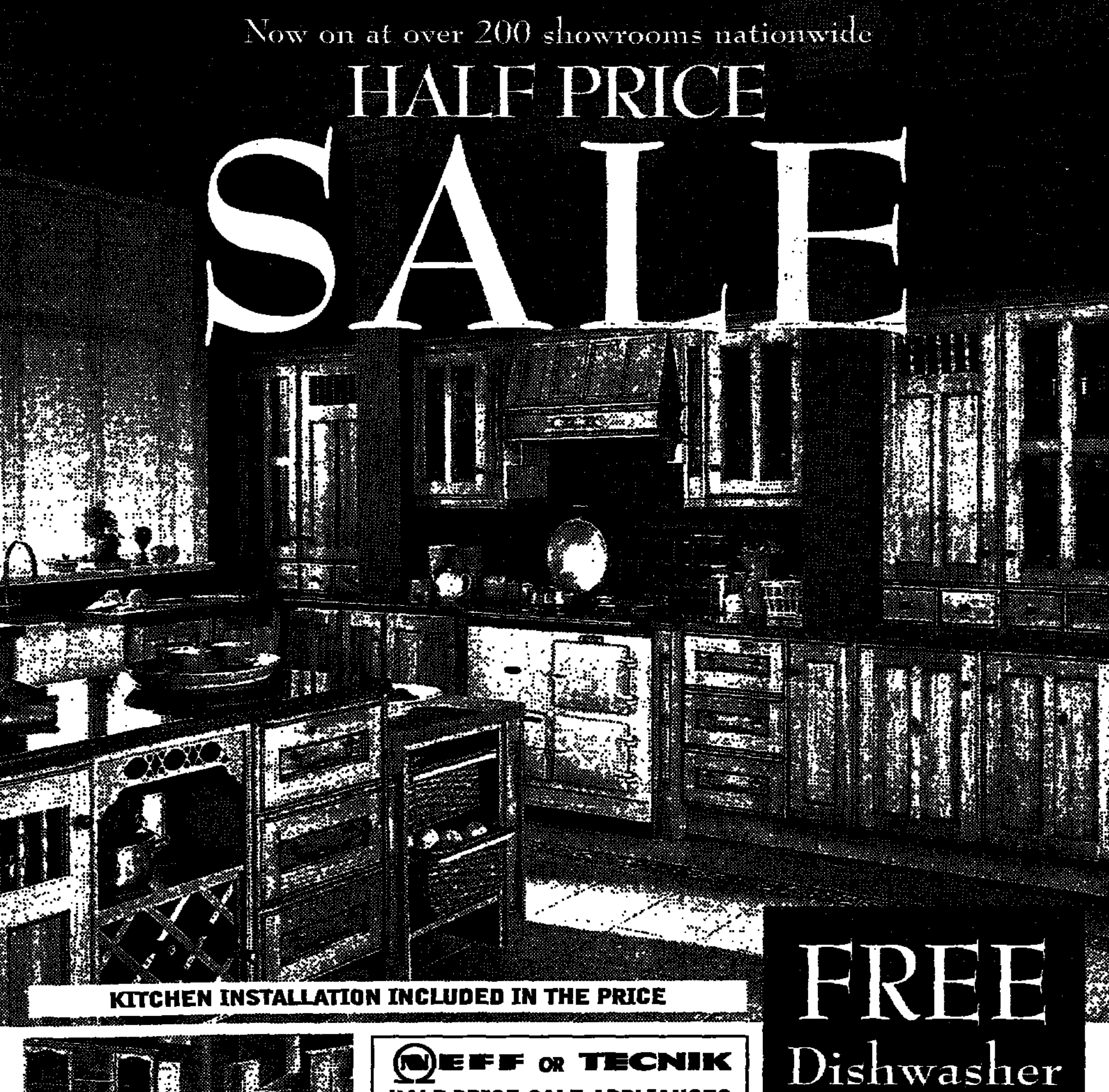
BEHIND the public face of government lie paranoia, secrecy, malice and panic. They always have. And the public records of 1968 show that old Labour was much the same as new Labour (and Conservatives of whatever age) in its cronies and class warriors, with their vendettas and projects.

So we overhear Ray Gunter grumbling about "middle-class bastards" in the Cabinet, anticipating John Major on some of his colleagues. Gunter also called Barbara Castle "that bitch". His observations were gratifyingly provided to posterity not by a television microphone which he thought was off the record, but by the official telephone exchange.

That summer the Government dreaded a second devaluation, which would have finished it. We hear of Operation Brutus, a plan (devised, of course, by economists) to prevent Britons from holidaying abroad, and to stop French wines being imported. George Brown walked out of the Cabinet in a fit of pique, and the Prime Minister was so terrified at the threat to his Government that he made 17 drafts of the customarily disingenuous letter accepting resignation.

It was the high tide of the Sixties, with hippies, marches, and protests against the Vietnam War. The Archbishop of Canterbury opined that the Remembrance Day parade had become out of date. The young seemed such peaceniks that Dr Ramsey suggested a service of universal penitence.

The human weaknesses behind stately facades should be no surprise. They have made rattling good faction from Sir Humphrey Appleby to Dickens. In his own version of Operation Brutus, Shakespeare made immortal the mixture between public statesmanship and private folly. It comes as a cheerful reminder that our Caesars are like the rest of us.





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Queen saved Remembrance Day

Valerie Elliott on moves to abolish wreaths and military involvement

The Queen blocked a Church plan to make Remembrance Day less militaristic. At a time of Ban the Bomb slogans, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Michael Ramsey, argued that many people found the Cenotaph service "distasteful" and that the young were not "parade minded".

In the year that marked the 50th anniversary of the Armistice, he suggested a new multifaith service dedicated to peace and self-sacrifice in all walks of life "and not only in the battlefield". He wanted to include an element of penitence for national shortcomings that had contributed to the world's troubles.

In a confidential report to James Callaghan, then Home Secretary, he also suggested that it was time to change the name of the service and said that the date and the 11am silence should be up for debate. The confidential report noted: "There is something to be said for a day when better weather than November can be expected, and at a time when more people can act concertedly than at 11am." All the wreath laying, except by the Queen, would also be cut out.

The move was immediately opposed by the Queen who believed the public would be unhappy and not understand such a change. Phillip Allen, Mr Callaghan's private secretary, reported: "For those of Her subjects (and they are still numerous) for whom it has a meaning, it stands. She believes, purely as the annual public recognition of those who gave their lives for their country in the two great wars of this century."

He added that the Queen accepted there may come a time when the ceremony had little public interest and "is inclined to think that when that time arrives it might be well to consider abandoning it altogether". The official believed that the Queen's opposition, probably shared by Commonwealth countries, made the Archbishop's plan impossible.

The Prime Minister was even more forceful. In a note scribbled in green ink on a Downing Street briefing paper, Mr Wilson wrote: "We should have to have strong evidence of a desire for change - since any variation, especially omissions (eg wreath laying) might cause heart-burnings and the feeling that we were 'forgetting'."

British cities faced 20,000 Hiroshimas

RUSSIAN atomic weapons targeted at Britain during the Cold War had 20,000 times the capability of nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima, intelligence documents brought to light under the 30-year rule reveal.

The "top secret" documents marked "for your eyes only" were accepted by ministers and defence chiefs as realistic assumptions for emergency planning. London would have taken the brunt of a nuclear attack with eight megatons of weaponry directed at the Government's control centres such as the Ministry of Defence.

Glasgow, Birmingham and Liverpool would also have suffered huge destruction with four megatons of missiles directed at each city. The government satellite "spy" listening centre, GCHQ, was also expected to be a prime target for the soviets who had a two megaton missile directed towards the Gloucestershire town.

A total of 389 megatons of Soviet nuclear weaponry was targeted at Britain. In comparison, 20 kilotons were dropped on Hiroshima.

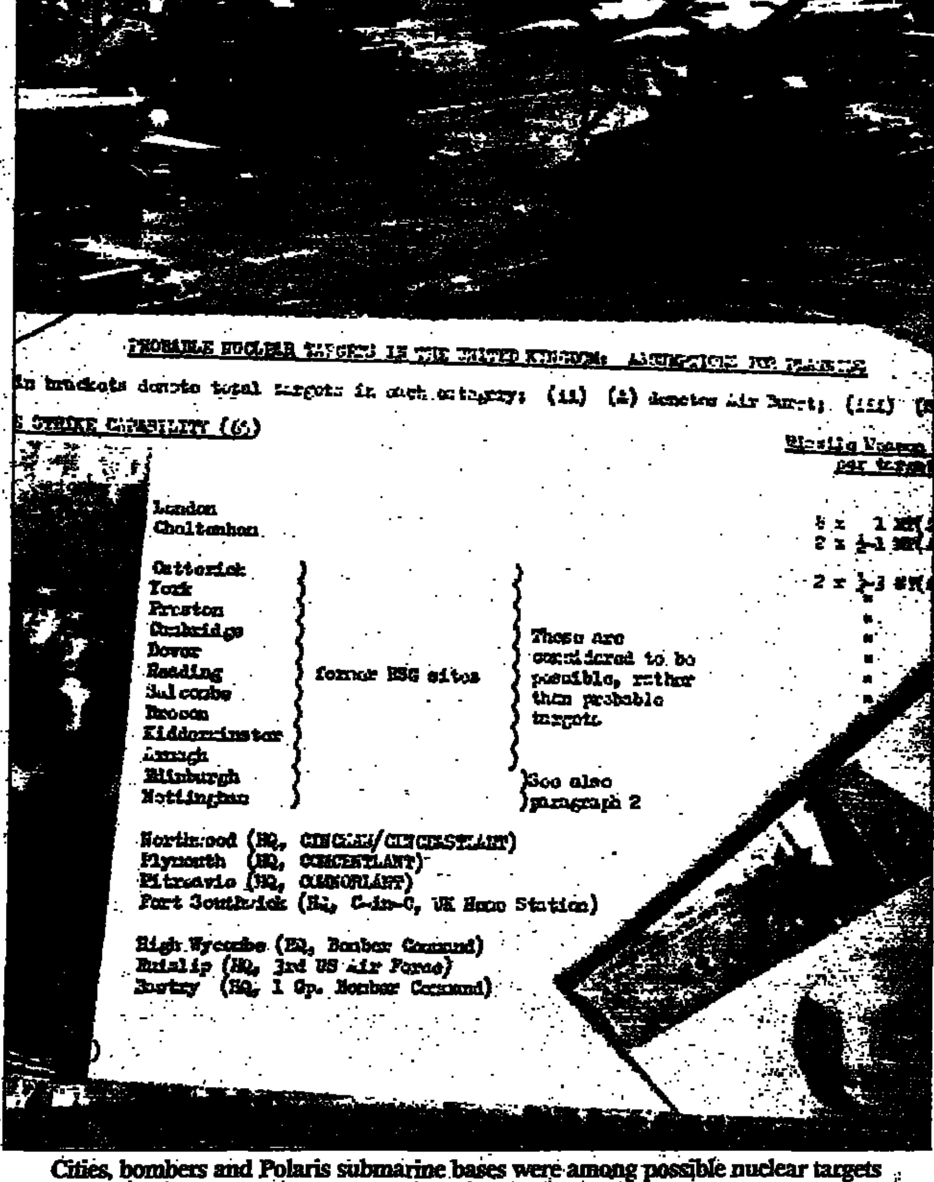
The cities listed as most vulnerable for attack were Cardiff, Manchester, Southampton, Leeds, Newcastle, Bristol, Sheffield, Swansea, Hull, Middlesbrough, Coventry, Wolverhampton, Leicester, Stoke-on-Trent, Belfast, Edinburgh and Nottingham. All RAF bomber bases and communication centres were also key targets, as were Polaris submarine bases.

Within a few months of the secret intelligence being circulated to military commanders, the Foreign Office took action to curb the spying activities of staff at the Russian Embassy in London. Michael Stewart, the Foreign Secretary, told Harold Wilson on September 28, 1968, that the numbers of Soviet diplomats had risen from 64 to 80 in four years, of which 62 were spies.

A third of the 95 non-diplomatic staff were also known to be intelligence officers and the Soviet trade delegation had 28 spies out of 180 staff. Britain had only 40 diplomats in Moscow.

Wilson gave orders to freeze the Soviet numbers after one of his officials noted on Mr Stewart's top-secret report: "These figures are truly monstrous."

□ The sending of Christmas cards to Russia was threatened by the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Michael Stewart, the Foreign Secretary, favoured crossing their leader, Alexei Kosygin, off the list but was overruled by Harold Wilson, who said: "It seems petty. We have not broken off diplomatic relations."



London
Cheltenham

Catterick
York
Preston
Dover
Reading
Brecon
Kidderminster
Edinburgh
Nottingham

former RSG sites

These are considered to be possible, rather than probable targets.

See also paragraph 2

Northwood (HQ, CINCHAN/CINCEASTLANT)
Plymouth (HQ, COMCENTLANT)
Fort Southwick (HQ, C-in-C, UK Home Station)

High Wycombe (HQ, Bomber Command)
Ruislip (HQ, 3rd US Air Force)

Cities, bombers and Polaris submarine bases were among possible nuclear targets

And the chargé d'affaires played on

IT WAS a classic example of British stiff upper lip. Outside the Beijing mission an angry mob was baying for blood. Inside Donald Hopson, the chargé d'affaires, and his staff were playing bridge and sipping claret.

It was August 1967, during the Cultural Revolution, and the Chinese Government had summoned Hopson to demand the release of Chinese journalists imprisoned in Hong Kong and the lifting of bans of three communist newspapers.

Hopson refused. In a memorandum to the Foreign Office recounting the events that followed, he recorded his sense of foreboding. "I took the opportunity to put the signed photograph of the Queen, as well as portraits of my wife and daughter, into the safety of the strong-room," he wrote.

The next evening the mission — with eighteen men and five women inside — was beseiged by a mob of thousands. Sir Donald organised a rubber of bridge while other staff watched a Peter Sellers film, *The Wrong Arm of the Law*.

Eventually the crowd broke through and the staff were subjected to assaults and humiliation before being taken to the safety of the international diplomatic compound. There was, Hopson noted, one saving grace: "The signed photograph of the Queen ... survived, though slightly singed."

THE YEAR IN BRIEF

Argentina was almost given the Falklands

Harold Wilson was prepared to give up the Falkland Islands to Argentina and proposed a 20-year transition. The two governments came close to agreement in secret talks in 1968 but they foundered because of the intransigence of the 2,000 inhabitants. One idea was for Welsh communities in Patagonia to be enlisted in a publicity campaign to promote the virtues of life under Argentine rule. George Brown, the Foreign Secretary, made clear that nothing could proceed without a referendum of islanders. Without one, Britain said it would be for Argentina to persuade the islanders of the advantages. The transition period was intended "to be long enough to allow the elder generation to disappear from the scene". Younger islanders were said to be more receptive.

CND 'communist threat'

The Government was warned by MI5 that communist agitators were planning to infiltrate the annual CND Aldermaston march after the Grosvenor Square riots in 1968. Documents show the deep fears triggered within the Establishment by violent anti-Vietnam war protests that March in Grosvenor Square. There was a widespread fear that the next catalyst for "revolutionary" violence would be the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament's Easter march on the Aldermaston weapons plant, even though the event had no history of violence.

Lords reform blocked

Tony Blair was not the first Labour Prime Minister to face a struggle to reform the House of Lords — and William Hague was not the first Tory leader to have difficulties with his own peers on the issue. Harold Wilson — who was engaged in delicate negotiations with Tory peers to avoid a lengthy constitutional battle — was so concerned about leaks that he called in MI5. He became so exasperated with what he saw as a deliberate attempt by Tories in the upper house to bring down his Government that he contemplated abolishing the Lords altogether.

'Rivers of blood' fears



The Government feared that Enoch Powell's "rivers of blood" speech on immigration would undermine race relations but Sir Elwyn Jones, the Attorney-General, decided within four days of the May 1968 address that the Conservative MP should not be prosecuted. Cabinet disliked the extreme views of Powell, right, but noted: "Unless the [immigrant] influx can be greatly reduced there will be a very real risk that our efforts to create a multiracial society ... will fail."

Police wanted cover-up

Harold Wilson's private secretary raised fears that the Prime Minister's security was threatened by the miniskirt. Such was the climate of fear after the assassination of Robert Kennedy that No 10 expressed concern that police patrolling Downing Street could not keep their eyes off the mini-clad girls who walked near St James's Park. Skirts were so short that even dry cleaners cashed in, charging twopence an inch for cleaning. Security men also banned Wilson from installing a colour television in his Commons office, fearing that it could be bugged.

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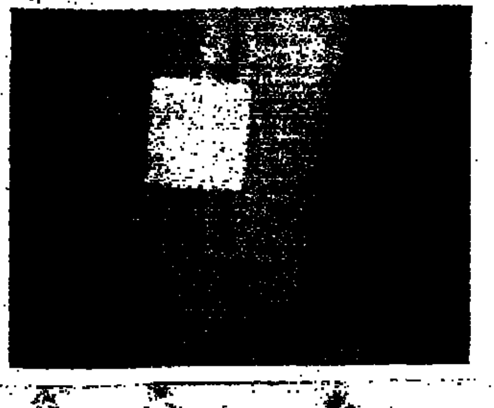
You start with the highest strength patch and then you step down to a lower strength patch, and finally to the lowest strength of all - 'till you are free of the need' (if you smoke less than 10 cigarettes a day you start with the middle strength).

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Whelan truly lost in the big mole hunt



Looking for the right Charlie: Allardyce yesterday

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Jason Allardyce finds the high road is a cold trail in the aftermath of Mandelson

THE SPIN-DOCTOR who prides himself on being just a mobile phone call away from journalists was last night successfully evading a press manhunt in the Scottish Highlands.

Charlie Whelan, blamed by Downing Street for leaking details of the financial relationship between Peter Mandelson and Geoffrey Robinson which led to the ministers' downfall, is believed to be walking in the Cairngorms almost a fortnight after disappearing off the political radar.

Scotland's biggest-selling daily newspaper, the *Daily Record*, carried a "wanted" poster offering a free flight to Whitehall for a drink in Mr Whelan's local, The Red Lion. But people living where clan chiefs and Jacobite rebels fought to decide how their country should be governed, have so far failed to turn him in. The last reported sighting of Mr Whelan at Westminster was on Thursday, December 17, four days before the story broke about Geoffrey Robinson's £373,000 home loan to Peter Mandelson. The former Communist was spotted in the evening in the press-gallery bar, drinking his trademark white-wine spritzers.

That was also the day that Mr Mandelson, then Trade and Industry Secretary, alerted Downing Street and the Whitehall machine that the story was about to blow. Since then, the usually ubiquitous Mr Whelan has vanished, first going to ground in London and then apparently retreating to Scotland with friends.

In calmer times, there are few more scrupulous than the Chancellor's press secretary at returning telephone calls. But since the start of the Mandelson affair, hundreds of messages left on his radio pager have gone unanswered. Callers are told: "Charlie Whelan is unavailable until the fourth of January." His mobile phone is turned off.

Some friends suggested that he was more likely to be away from the Cairngorms and delighting in the notion of reporters scouring the Highlands for him. "He'll probably turn up next week and declare that he's been somewhere else the whole time," said a friend who had not been in contact with him for more than a week.

Another source close to the Chancellor said that he believed Mr Whelan had been unfairly fingered for the leak, that no minister's camp was "perfect", and that he had been in the Cairngorms around Christmas but was probably elsewhere now. Another suggestion is that Mr Brown sheltered the embattled assistant at his own home in Queensferry for a spell to help keep him out of the public eye.

A spokesman for the Treasury said that Mr Whelan had left London last Tuesday for Scotland, as he had last year. His paging message simply stated that he would be unavailable until January 4.

Anyone climbing the treacherous hills of the Cairgorms normally leaves details of any climbing routes with the local police but there was no record of Mr. Whelan. Car-hire companies in Inverness, Aberdeen and Edinburgh also drew a blank. There are more than 100 hotels in the Cairngorms and hundreds more holiday cottages. Aviemore was bustling with New Year revellers last night but there was no sign of Mr Whelan.

At the Red McGregor Hotel, the manager passed a handwritten note that it was company policy for local staff not to speak to journalists. Drinkers there had mixed views of Mr Whelan but most believed he had acted fairly if he had indeed "done the dirty" on Mr Mandelson. "We need more down to earth people like that in the Government," said one.

The trail appeared to hot up near Kincraig, a small Speyside village near the still waters of Loch Insh. At the village's Watersports Centre, six miles south of Aviemore, the manager Clive Freshwater confirmed that a Mr Whelan had been staying in a £600-a-week chalet there since Wednesday.

It was the same hideaway where Sir Michael Hirst went in 1997 upon resigning as president of the Scottish Conservative Party after he believed that allegations about his private life were going to be published in a newspaper.

Unfortunately the occupant was a Mr Mark Whelan, who was nothing like the man the *Daily Record*, except that he was unavailable. Mr Freshwater, 59, is a fan of Peter Mandelson as a man who like Margaret Thatcher "got things done and helped business".

As temperatures dipped, the trail ran as cold as the Cairngorms once more.



Whelan: friends say he may enjoy the hunt



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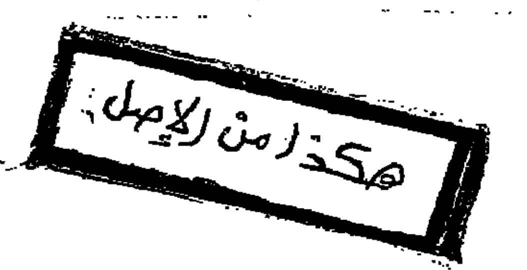
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Detective Sergeant Bryan Redshaw with the Bramleys' car, which was found in York. Right: the children's coats



Jade Bennett, left, and her sister, Hannah, have been missing for four months. Police fear for their wellbeing

New lead in search for fugitive parents

By Russell Jenkins

POLICE are hoping that the discovery of a car belonging toa runaway couple who vanished with their two foster daughters will be a breakthrough in their hunt.

Detectives have been searching for Jeffrey Bramley, 34, and his wife, Jennifer, 35, since they disappeared from their home in Ramsey, Cambridgeshire, four months ago with Jade Bennett, 5, and her sister, Hannah, 3.

The couple, who had been turned down as permanent adoptive parents of the two children, vanished on the day they were due to hand them over to social services.

They are believed to have been wandering between holiday resorts, bed and breakfast hotels and caravan sites. In spite of widespread publicity, including a major appeal on the BBC's *Crimewatch UK*, there have been no confirmed sightings.



Jeffrey and Jennifer Bramley: withdrew all their savings

The car was discovered last Tuesday when a member of the public called police to report the vehicle abandoned near his home in the Scarcroft Hill district of York. The Honda Concerto, registration number G152SHR, contained some of the missing girls' clothes, their car seats and other documentation. It had been parked at the spot for five weeks.

Detective Sergeant Mark Nicholson, of the Cambridgeshire Constabulary, said: "After nearly four months we have finally had a major breakthrough in our search for this family.

"We will now be closely examining the vehicle and hope its recovery will give us further clues as to where the family is now.

"The area where the vehicle was found is made up of a mix of residential homes and bed and breakfast and guest house accommodation. The family, of course, could still be in the area and we would urge anyone who recognises them to come forward."

Police believe that the car, which has four new tyres, may have had work carried out on it at a garage in the York area. "We would like to appeal to owners of bed and breakfast accommodation and also to commuters. The vehicle was found a short distance from the railway station," Sergeant Nicholson said. Mr Bramley, a postal worker, and his wife, who have no children of their own, were hoping to adopt the two girls.

They had been caring for them since March and last September they learnt that social workers had decided they had "inadequate parenting skills" to adopt the girls permanently. Such is the level of concern about the children's wellbeing that Mrs Justice Hogg, of the High Court's family division, made a public appeal for help in November, saying that she was concerned that their health and educational needs were not being met.

Since that time there have been reports of sightings in Norfolk, Sussex, Buckinghamshire and the Irish Republic but none have been confirmed.

Police said that the Bramleys had withdrawn their savings before vanishing and believe that they may soon run out of cash.

Army finds proof of weaker sex

By Our Medical Correspondent

WOMEN soldiers are at least three times more likely than men to suffer stress fractures during basic fitness training, according to a study published today in the *British Medical Journal*.

The report's authors, from the Royal Hospital Haslar, in Gosport, Hampshire, noticed a fourfold increase in referrals for injuries between 1994 and 1996 and wondered if it had anything to do with the Defence Ministry's equal opportunities policy introduced in 1993 which subjected women to the same rigorous exercise as men.

They studied bone scans of all the recruits from the Army Training Regiment in Winchester, Hampshire, referred in 1995-97 and found 4.2 per cent of men suffered stress fractures compared with 14.2 per cent of women.

Migraines triple young women's risk of a stroke

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

YOUNG women who suffer from migraines are 3½ times more at risk of a stroke. The danger increases if they smoke, take oral contraceptives or have high blood pressure.

Researchers from the Radcliffe Infirmary at Oxford and the Imperial College, London, School of Medicine studied the cases of 291 women aged 20 to 44 who had suffered a stroke. They found that among 40 per cent of patients with a history of migraine, the stroke occurred during a migraine attack.

They also found that a family history of migraine, irrespective of whether the patient suffered from it, increased the risk of a stroke. A quarter of the women who had a stroke suffered from migraine and another 26 per cent had someone in their family with the condition. In women with a prior history of migraine, up to 73 per cent had a headache within three days before the stroke, compared with 31 per cent of women who had never suffered from the condition.

The study, published in the *British Medical Journal*, says that oral contraceptives were already known to be an independent risk factor for strokes, especially among women over 35 who smoke or have a history of hypertension. The link with those who also suffer from migraine has not previously been noted.

Low-dose oestrogen pills were safer than those with a higher dose but the researchers say that it was not possible to calculate accurately the interaction between the contraceptives and a stroke.

New Year honours

The following details were omitted from the New Year's Honours list details in some editions of *The Times* yesterday.

CBE: G N Phipson, headmaster West Hatch HS, Essex, services to the Assn of Headteachers of Grant Maintained Schools.

MBE: A Hutchison, lately Principal lighthouse keeper, Fair Isle (South) Lighthouse, Orkney, services to marine safety; Mary-Grace, Lady Hutchison, services to the Community in Melton, Suffolk; Sister M K Hyland, services to the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Glasgow; R G Ingall, services to deaf people in Lincolnshire; C A Inger, senior messenger, Home Office; B Ingle, boxing trainer, St Thomas Boxing club, Sheffield, services to disadvantaged young people and to boxing; M E Ingle, services to Anglo/Japanese trade links; Mrs M A Ironside, services to the fostering of children on Guernsey; Mrs C A Cockerill, services to the Citizens' Advice Bureaux in Cambridgeshire; Mrs D Cockett, services to the Friends of St Thomas' Hospital, London.

CORRECTIONS

An article (November 25) implied criticism of the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, for his "failure" to back away from the Queen after presenting to her the speech at the state opening of Parliament. The proposal to cease the practice of stepping backwards from the throne was made by the Queen herself.

☐ The Munich agreement was in September 1938, not 1936 as incorrectly stated in a report (December 3). The then Lord Cranborne had at that time already left the Government, having resigned the previous February, together with Anthony Eden, over the appeasement of Mussolini.

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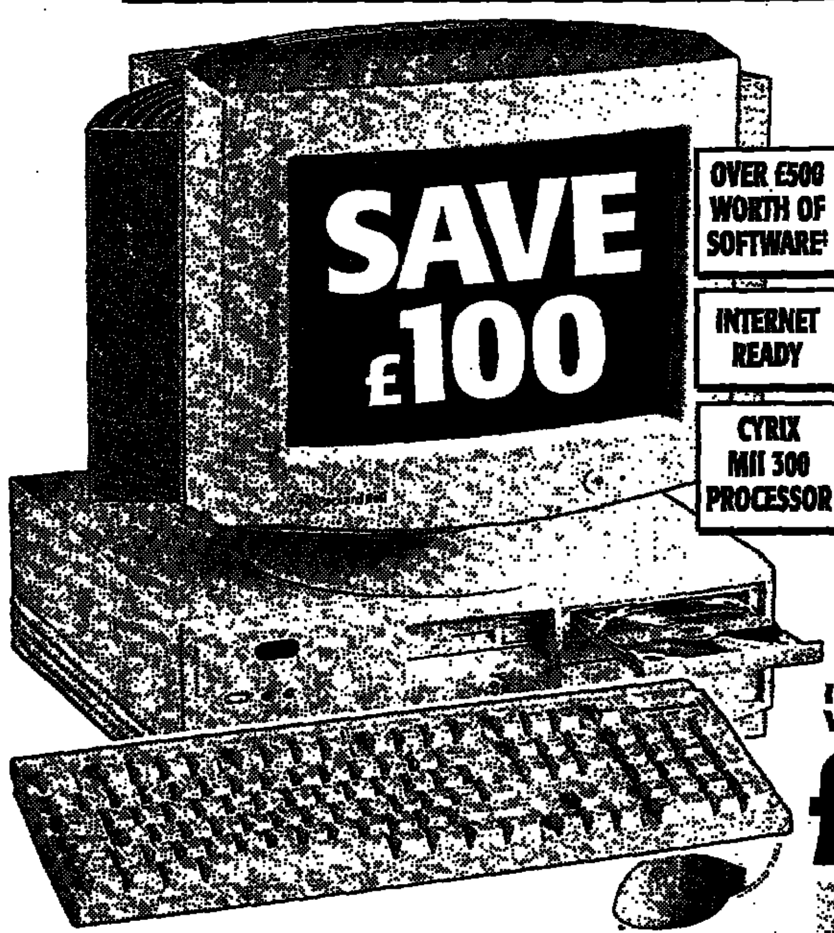
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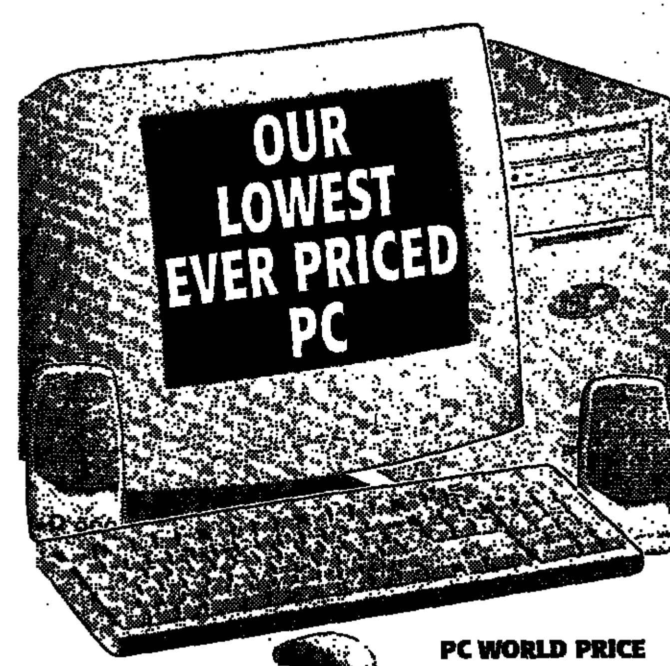
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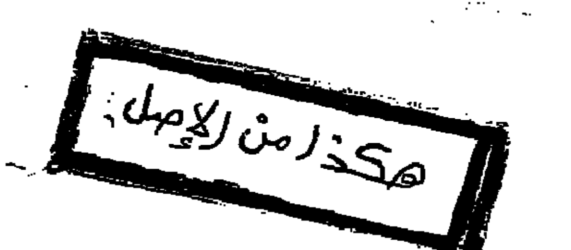
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Hostages forced to change their stories

Daniel McGrory in Aden reports on claims that a Yemeni 'whitewash' seeks to absolve soldiers of blame

SECRET police yesterday forced a survivor of the Yemeni hostage massacre to change his testimony about how his wife died in the bungled rescue attempt, to remove any suggestion that Yemeni troops fired the fatal shot.

Laurence Whitehouse said that he had reluctantly altered his written statement after he and his fellow survivors had been interrogated for several hours.

"I just want to take my wife home to be buried. I don't care what version the Yemenis want to believe," he said.

But Mr Whitehouse dismissed as "pure fiction" the finding of a post-mortem examination carried out in Aden yesterday that his wife, Margaret, had been shot at point-blank range by her captors. Other survivors also spoke of their disgust at the attempted "whitewash" by their rescuers.

David Holmes, who was beside Mrs Whitehouse during the shootout between their captors and security forces, said that he had no doubt that the advancing troops shot her.

"The Yemenis are telling complete and utter lies. And this was a shameful way to treat a man who has just lost his wife," he said.

Before the nine British hostages began their journey home last night they were told to fill in questionnaires from the Yemeni secret police, which included "evaluating the success of the rescue operation". Mr Whitehouse, 54, from Hook, Hampshire, said: "I wrote 'Four dead, 12 survived.' It speaks for itself."

Mr Whitehouse then had to wait his turn in the stifling restaurant of the hotel at which the survivors had been kept for three days to be cross-examined on his answers. He had written that when his wife fell to the ground with half her face torn away he had shouted to their captors: "You have killed my wife."

"The Yemenis liked that expression but I added 'the bullet could have been anybody's'," he said. "The colonel questioning me did not like that bit and asked me to delete it."

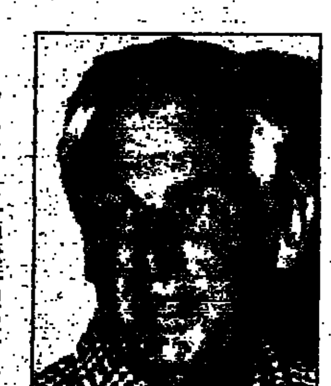
Mr Whitehouse was standing with his hands in the air two yards from his wife, who was nursing Andrew Thirsk, another hostage, when Yemeni soldiers charged the ridge on which they were held at gunpoint as human shields.

Trembling as he spoke, Mr Whitehouse said: "They shouldn't be using my wife's death as a political football. The culpability was the terrorists'. They kidnapped us, they used us as human shields. There can't be any greater culpability than that.

"The issue of who fired the bullet is irrelevant to the loss her pupils, her hundreds of friends feel. I have lost a wife of 27 years."

Hussain Arab, Yemen's Interior Minister, insisted yesterday that the army was ordered in only after the Al-Jihad kidnappers threatened to execute a hostage every hour.

That contradicted the original claim by General Mohammad Saleh Turaik, Aden's security chief, that three of the captives were executed before the raid began. The hostages say that they were never threatened.



Holmes: "Yemenis are telling complete lies"

The general presided over the questioning of the survivors yesterday. He refused to accept a typed statement, agreed by all the survivors, which is believed to be critical of the rescue operation. An aide said that four hostages changed their statements under questioning to say that the terrorists fired first. When questioned by journalists, the group unanimously agreed that the shooting was too far away to say who fired first.

David Pearce, Britain's deputy ambassador to Yemen, said: "We did not know they were going to use force. We were *not* consulted and we ... would *never* have condoned that use of force." He said Britain was demanding to know why the raid was ordered, as well as a fair trial for the leader of the kidnappers, Abdul Hassan. An FBI investigator arrived in Aden yesterday amid reports that Al-Jihad was funded by Osama Bin Laden, the Saudi billionaire living in Afghanistan who was allegedly behind bombings at US embassies in Africa.

Yemeni opposition leaders claimed that the Government had known before the kidnapping that the 400-strong Al-Jihad was running a terrorist training camp in the area but had done nothing.

Before leaving Aden the survivors visited their injured friends, Margaret Thompson and Claire Marston, whose husband, Peter Rowe, was killed.

PETER NICHOLLS



Laurence Whitehouse, right, is comforted by Chris Cheeseman, a fellow survivor, as they leave Aden yesterday





Scientists keep an ear open for ET

BY NICK NUTTALL TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

THE most advanced search for intelligent alien life is to be launched by British and American scientists using the Jodrell Bank radio telescope to screen out interference from the Earth's own radio and television signals.

The scientists will be listening for signals in a band called the "water hole" which lies between 1,420 MHz and 1,600 MHz, or between the frequencies of hydrogen and oxygen. Like a water hole where disparate animals gather, this is the area of frequency where aliens could hope to communicate across the miles of space.

Previous searches have used a single radio telescope to listen for suitable signals. This has led to errors due to interference from spy planes and broadcasts on Earth. Now Jodrell Bank is linking with a Caribbean telescope to allow researchers to dismiss rogue signals more swiftly.

Ian Morison, the engineer and radio astronomer co-ordinating the British end of the research, said that when the Arecibo dish in Puerto Rico picks up a suitable signal, it will be relayed to Jodrell Bank which will be listening on the same bit of sky from Cheshire.

If the signal is really interference from within our solar system, the exact same signal will be detected by both telescopes. If the signal is coming from a solar system far away, the frequency Jodrell Bank detects will be slightly different.

The two telescopes, whose work is being funded by the privately backed Seti Institute in California, have made some preliminary searches. But the Arecibo telescope suffered some damage late last year as a result of Hurricane George.

The real work begins in March. Mr Morison said that he was keeping an open mind about possible findings.



Jodrell Bank: able to distinguish ET from TV

NEWS IN BRIEF

Boy falls under van wheels

A boy aged three was critically ill after falling from a van and being run over by the back wheels. Jake Lloyd was with his brother Jordan, 6, in the passenger seat when he opened the door. The van was driven by their cousin, David Weller, 20, who was returning the boys to their home in Reading after a family party. The boy was taken to Great Ormond Street Hospital. Police are to question Mr Weller and the injured boy's brother.

Death charge

Two men were remanded after the death of a boy aged 7, hit by a stolen taxi in West Belfast. Steven Sweeney, 25, and Paul McCusker, 27, were charged with hijacking and Sweeney alone with causing death by dangerous driving.

Omagh concert

The pop group Boyzone are to perform in Omagh this weekend in aid of victims of the bombing atrocity. Members of the chart-topping band will also meet survivors of the blast during their day-long visit to the town tomorrow.

Last journey

A taxi driver and a woman passenger died when the vehicle was crushed by a lorry on the M25 in Buckinghamshire. The woman aged 34 was going from Heathrow to spend New Year's Eve with family in Chorleywood, Hertfordshire.

Ancient saddle

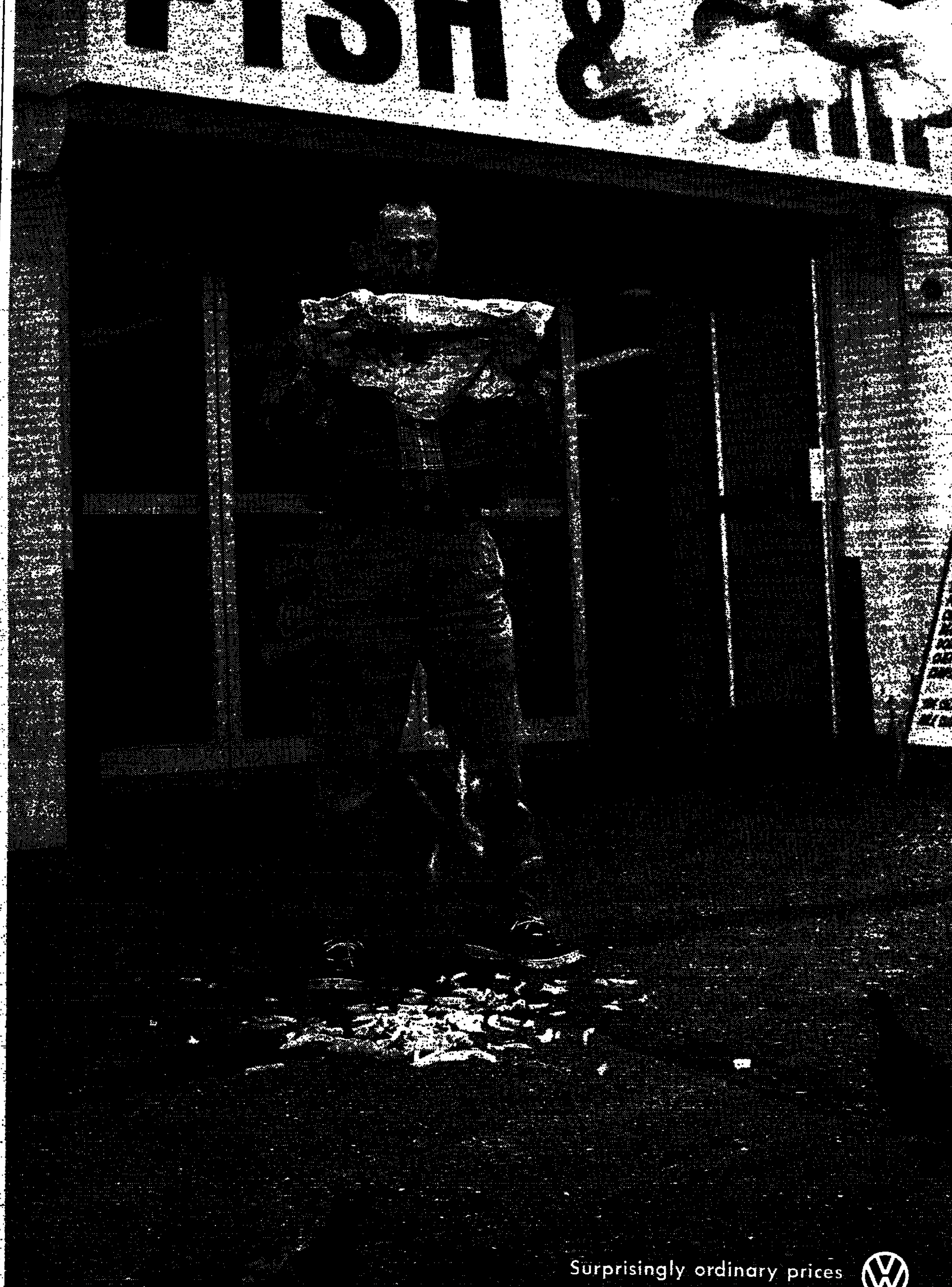
Archaeologists have found a medieval saddle in a dig near the old city walls of Carlisle, Cumbria. The decorated leatherwork, believed to be about 500 years old, was well preserved by the waterlogged ditch in which it was found.

£800,000 tome

A famous 17th century book on flowers, *The Moller Florilegium*, which had been lost for nearly 150 years, is expected to fetch up to £800,000 at Christie's in London in March. It contains more than 200 flower paintings on vellum.

Gecko discovery

A British student has discovered a new species of gecko during a trip to the South Pacific. Julia Jones, 21, an ecology student at Cambridge University, found the 16cm-long lizard among rocks on Mont Ignambi in New Caledonia.



EUROPE'S NEW CURRENCY

Bubbly and balloons for the EU baby

From Charles Bremner in Brussels

IN KEEPING with the seasonal spirit, a jolly cartoon stork was used by the European Union yesterday to herald the arrival of the baby euro, along with the new year.

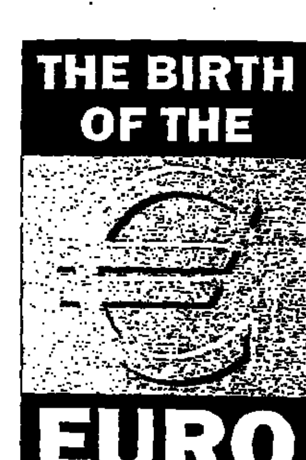
But the Brussels ceremony smacked far more of a wedding, replete with champagne, emotion, forced speeches, poor jokes and a family spat.

There was a nuptial feel about the solemn yet festive manner in which ministers, the British ambassador, the Commission President and the Central Bank governor gathered in the pink granite palace of the EU Council to confer their collective blessing on monetary union.

After all the years of rehearsal, sacrifice and bickering, the relief was palpable when the ministers, in the role of best men, popped the corks of their salmanazar bottles of champagne and toasted the mass matrimony of the lira, escudo, peseta, three national francs, two marks, guilder, schilling and the Irish pound.

A little over-emotional, Yves-Thibault de Silguy, the Brussels Monetary Commissioner, shocked the guests by threatening to spray them with bubbly in the style of a victorious Formula One driver.

Outside in the courtyard, children, decked from head to foot in the blue and gold of the European flag, counted down from *dix, neuf, huit* ... to *un* and released 3,000 balloons into the grey Brussels sky for



the benefit of the television cameras.

"This shows everything is going to become prosperous," said Jean-Louis Fourmy, the man from the Brussels balloon firm, who complained that he had been charged a special balloon-launching tax by the Belgian authorities.

In the distance, a gaggle of anti-euro demonstrators from The Netherlands chanted their disapproval of the single currency.

But first had come the euro ritual, in which the officials calculated the rates at which the 11 currencies would lock together and dissolve themselves into the new at midnight. The rates were disclosed when Jacques Santer, the President of the Commission, in an avuncular mood, pulled a curtain from an illuminated scoreboard. The Italians shed an arithmetical tear as 1,936.27 lire became a single euro.

Like all weddings, the vicar, in the shape of Wim Duisenberg, the dry-humoured Governor of the European Central Bank, reminded the congregation that the union was irreversible. Then followed the oratory, in which the ministers competed with lofty metaphors to convey the emotion of the occasion.

"We are standing at the dawn of a new era in history," said Rudolf Edlinger, the Austrian Finance Minister and the outgoing EU finance chairman, setting the tone.

Minister after minister invoked history and added a national twist. Carlo Ciampi, for Italy, gave a taste of Rome's relief that the lira had not been jilted. "Italian money is no longer national. Today it becomes European," he beamed, adding that Italy now wants even closer union.

The Finnish minister spoke of his country's joy at being part of the euro union. Like the rich father of a bride espousing a poorer partner, the Germans sounded warnings on the need for thrift and effort, adding a swipe at Britain on fiscal misbehaviour. The effect was diminished by the fact that the sermon was delivered by Werner Müller, the Economy Minister, in the absence of Oskar Lafontaine, the Finance Minister, who preferred to stayed home with his family.

Denmark, which is staying out of the euro, surprised the gathering when its minister proclaimed her conviction it would soon join. Portugal was thrilled to be part of a monetary giant, its minister said.

True to form, France offered the most lyrical address. Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the minister, invoked the dreams of Victor Hugo and ended "Vive La France en Europe!" Also keeping wedding tradition, "Uncle" Jacques Santer paid homage to the euro's illustrious but absent grandparents, in the form of Jacques Delors, the former Commission President, the late François Mitterrand of France and Helmut Kohl, the former German Chancellor.

Britain, the troublesome outsider at the festivities, offered a characteristally jarring note when Sir Stephen Wall, the Ambassador to the EU, eschewed the historic tone in favour of a questionable joke. Tony Blair, he recalled, had presided over the "longest lunch in the history of the EU" when the leaders had squabbled over the appointment of Mr Duisenberg at their Brussels summmit last May.

Yesterday's euro lunch had been one of the shortest, Sir Stephen said. "Perhaps we can converge on a central rate for lunches in the EU," he added, producing strained laughter. Sir Stephen declared: "We wish it every success."

The euro family tiff came from the sparring match between Mr Duisenberg and France. The Dutchman has upset Paris by proclaiming this week he has no intention of stepping down after only four years in the eight-year post at the bank in favour of a Frenchman. The arrangement was brokered by Mr Blair in March as a way of appeasing President Chirac's desire to have the job immediately for his country. Mr Duisenberg again asserted his independence yesterday, however, earning a stinging riposte from M Strauss-Kahn, who said Mr Duisenberg would be breaking his solemn promise.

☐ **Rome:** The Italian Government presided over the minting of its first euro coins yesterday, but Rome postal workers spoilt the festive launch by announcing a strike in protest at being inadequately equipped to work with the currency.

Paul Sykes, page 16
Leading article,
Letters, page 17
Business News, page 40

PHILIPPE HUGUEN / AFP



European Union finance ministers and officials mark the unveiling in Brussels yesterday of the fixed rates of currencies against the euro

Praise for Briton who charted currency course



THE oddest sight at yesterday's ceremonies to launch the euro was of a senior, but largely unknown, British civil servant, being offered a standing ovation by all the finance ministers of euroland (Charles Bremner writes).

Sir Nigel Wicks, 58, the Treasury's international director, was being hailed for his outstanding work over five years as chairman of the EU monetary committee, the secretive body of national officials that has led the technical preparations for the euro.

Since 1993 Sir Nigel, who is standing down this month and who was awarded the

MAN WHO MADE IT HAPPEN

GCB in the New Year Honours, has earned the esteem of EU finance ministries with his skill in steering the project through the uncharted waters leading to its creation.

The paradox of a British official at the helm of the finance committee has long worn off in the EU world, where he has wielded great influence in the decisions that shaped the euro.

Sir Nigel, who guards his privacy with the tenacity of the model Whitehall man, became a power in the EU after helping John Major to negotiate Britain's opt-out from monetary union at the Maastricht summit in 1991. Since 1993 the Cambridge graduate and former BP executive has commuted regularly to Brussels and other EU capitals from his home in Guildford, attracting little public recognition except for his nomination last autumn in a much-publicised list of the 300 most influential people in Britain.

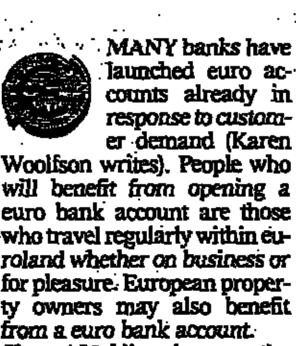
Although seen initially as a Eurosceptic, Sir Nigel took to the nuts and bolts of building the single currency with such enthusiasm that French, German and other officials have treated him not as an agent of the outside camp, but as one of their own. "He has made damned sure this thing works," said a senior French official.

Yesterday, Sir Nigel blushed and looked at the table when Rudolf Edlinger, the Austrian chairman of the finance ministers' council, said: "On behalf of the council, I want to express our admiration and deeply-felt gratitude. Thank you very much Sir Nigel Wicks." The council broke into spontaneous applause. German speakers noted that Sir Nigel was the only participant whom Herr Edlinger had not addressed with the intimate *Du*, sticking with the formal *Sie*.



Wicks: led preparations for monetary union

Regular travellers will enjoy benefits of new bank accounts



MANY banks have launched euro accounts already in response to customer demand (Karen Woolfson writes). People who will benefit from opening a euro bank account are those who travel regularly within euroland whether on business or for pleasure. European property owners may also benefit from a euro bank account.

Shares: Holding shares on the Continent may be easier with a euro bank account. Anyone with a connection in euroland, such as family in Spain, or who plans to retire or study somewhere in the zone could

INVESTMENT

also benefit from opening a euro account.

Credit cards: Transactions on credit cards and debit cards in euroland will be quoted both in the euro and in the local currency. Cater Allen Bank has just launched a euro-denominated Visa card in conjunction with a euro bank account. The card allows customers to pay in the new currency without incurring any foreign exchange transaction charges.

Euro-friendly plastic cards and accounts are expected to become commonplace within the first year of the euro's inception.

Dual pricing: From today the local currency of each participating country will be fixed to the euro. So if, for example, you drive to the French Riviera and then go to the Dordogne the week after, the exchange rate between the euro and the French franc should not vary at any point during your holiday.

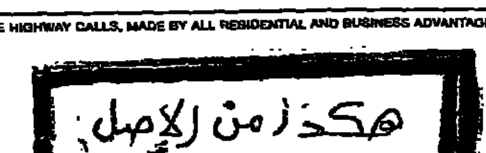
Price comparisons: It will be easier to remember one exchange rate (the euro against sterling) rather than the 11 different local exchange rates around euroland that eventually will disappear anyway.

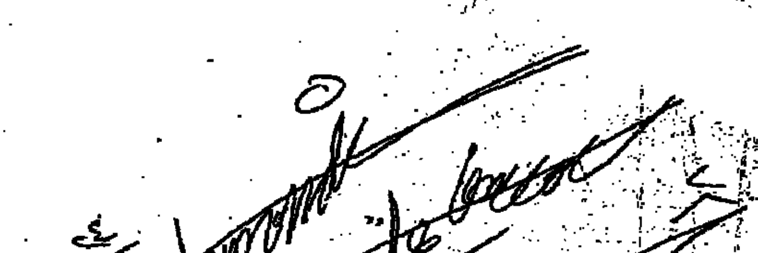
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EUROPE'S NEW CURRENCY

Germans eat their way nto moneary newera

FROM ROG BOYES IN BN

THE Germansll usher in the new financera today by eating the euro.

In a party oule the European Central nk's headquarters in Fkfurt, Germans will tuckto chocolate euros and abo0,000 people will arrange thselves into a huge human sion of the euro symbol. Helicopter-borne televisi teams will capture what nkfurt's city elders are alrey calling "the picture of the ctury".

A vast euroke has been baked and wie on display at Frankfurt port. A euro-jigsaw has beproducedand banners are g strung up in the airp announcing "Welcome to roland". The euro, in shors being given the *Jeux sans ontières* treatment. The oriial plans were much grandeand the contrast between m and reality shows how soly and uneasily the Germs are adapting to the slow de of the mark.

Helmut K when Chancellor and ThWaigel, his Finance Minis fought hard to make Frarurt the seat of the EuropeaCentral Bank. They insistedat the new currency shoulbe called the euro rather n ecu, which has French chotations, and they fought d to make the European Cral Bank resemble the Bdesbank.

Having wall those battles, it wouldave been logical to grandnd in Frankfurt on Newar's Day. Different propos were mooted — a summit statesmen and central bankads from euroland, a sound light show on the Franrt skyline and a dazzling ework display transmitted satellite television aroune world.

But no mey was made available athe party, such as it is, is befinanced largely by prie banks. The *FrankfurterRundschau* lamented: "Ahat remains is an averagneighbourhood street festi: choco-euros, some sauses and some mulled win.

Petra RotMayor of Frankfurt, has be lobbying hard to make hcity competitive with Lond as a financial centre. Herarketing slogan is: "Frankfuisn't large, but it's great". t euro celebration suggestat the City of London neet be too nervous. Frau Rowill be watching the party television — she saw no ason to come back from liday for the launch celebron.

Numbers game hits City screens

BY SUSIE STEINER

ON one computer a game of Pacman chomped across the screen. Employees, in jeans and trainers, leant back on chairs dotted around a cavernous trading floor that normally seats 600. They chatted, they made tea, they exchanged New Year's Eve plans.

Then, at 11.54am yesterday, a figure flashed on a screen which signified the culmination of more than 30 years of economic and political planning. London learnt, at that moment, that there are to be 1.95583 German marks to the euro. For ever.

But as monetary union came to fruition, setting 11 European currencies at a permanent rate in relation to each other, there was barely a flicker of response on the Barclays Capital trading floor.

"It's very much in line with expectations," said a relaxed Jane Foley, currency strategist for the investment bank, who sat in front of three stagnant computer screens while the droning voice of the German Finance Minister piped out of her desk microphone.

The biggest surprise would be if there were a surprise. "It's a success because nothing has happened. There is no drama and that's the way we want it because the point of the euro is to get away from volatility." Other euro rates floated in soon afterwards, with the French franc closely followed by the Italian lira, the Spanish peseta, the Portuguese escudo, the Finnish markka, the Irish pound, the Belgian and the Luxembourg francs, the Dutch guilder and the Austrian schilling. All these currencies will eventually cease to exist, and the market which played on the fluctuations between them was largely ended out long ago.

"Trading between the French franc and the lira was phased out two years ago," said Nick Douch, economic risk adviser for Barclays Capital. "It's one of the reasons why emerging markets became so important."

While 11 currencies undergo their planned euthanasia, sterling (accompanied by the monies of Sweden, Denmark and Greece) continues to fight for life with its power in considerable peril. "The biggest risk is that we are not in," said Mr Douch.

"If you are a British company and you are selling to Europe in sterling, from Monday you are going to find it very difficult because they will be trading in euros. Sterling is going to look a very small currency."

The diminution of sterling next to the mighty euro is also taking place, on a symbolic level, in the new vocabulary of trading to start from Monday.

While up to now sterling has always had the proud status of denominator, traders will now speak in terms of sterling-to-the-euro. Eyes now will be on the value of the euro against other fluctuating currencies such as the dollar, the yen and the pound.

"What we are waiting for is the value against the dollar," said Ms Foley.

"That's what counts. Most people expect the euro to strengthen but I don't agree. It will move according to fundamental economic factors. The economic slowdown that we are expecting in 1999 indicates that there is a greater need for competetive currencies." Although the City's Square Mile will remain all but deserted over the three-day new year break, there are those behind the scenes working round the clock to secure the smooth transition to euro trading.

Computer technicians must switch thousands of screens to a new picture, deleting the German mark, the lira and the rest and replacing them with a single euro line.

And it was a dull New Year's Eve for the City's converters, who must translate trillions of pounds of debt and assets from the old currencies into the new.

An estimated 30,000 workers will be redenominating bank deposits of £280 billion, about £1.3 trillion of government securities, 20,000 share securities and 47,000 futures and options contracts.

Barclays Capital, where about 200 employees will work through the weekend, has booked 80 hotel rooms and will keep its canteen running round the clock.

'There is no surprise, no drama and that's the way we want it'

PAUL ROGERS



Currency strategist Jane Foley: "Most people are expecting the euro to strengthen, but I don't agree"

Creeps, shocks and the dreaded h-word

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

NEWS from the European Union in 1999 will be dominated by a mammoth squabble over who pays what for running the Union and its £30 billion annual farm subsidies. To cut through the jargon *The Times* offers a glossary of eurospeak:

GLOSSARY

- □ **euroland:** 11 states adopting the single currency. Population 300 million.
- □ **euro-11:** council of finance ministers, expected to emerge as virtual economic government of euroland
- □ **pre-ins:** countries "not yet" in the single currency, namely Britain, Greece, Denmark and Sweden.
- □ **euro creep:** the increasing adoption of the euro as a parallel currency in pre-ins.
- □ **stability pact:** sets fines for euro countries that run high budget deficits.
- □ **asymetric shock:** local economic trouble. Excuse for breaking stability pact.
- □ **federative shock:** leap to deeper economic and political integration.
- □ **harmonisation:** h-word, means reducing differences in tax levels to ensure level playing field. In some cases likely to mean levelling upwards to protect high taxes.
- □ **social dumping:** using low taxes to attract investment. Code for tax system in Britain and Ireland.
- □ **social harmonisation:** French scheme for setting European minimum wage, cutting working hours.
- □ **Oskar Lafontaine:** unpleasant face of federalism. Number one fan of h-word.
- □ **solidarity:** helping out EU partners with problems by sending them money.
- □ **cohesion funds:** cash for Ireland, Spain, Portugal and Greece out of solidarity to raise living standards.
- □ **structural funds:** regional aid programme. Punch-up looming over new shareout of diminishing kitty.
- □ **stabilisation:** freezing EU budget at current level.
- □ **Agenda 2000:** grand six-year spending package. May be ready by 2000.
- □ **ad-hoc solution on the revenue side:** euphemism for British-style rebate from EU budget.
- □ **correction:** what Germany wants done to its £8 billion EU membership bill.

Bonn presidency to push for closer political union

BY CHARLES BREMNER

GERMANY takes over the six-month presidency of the EU from Austria today, aiming to use the launch of the euro as a spur to closer political union, more harmonised taxes and a new deal on its share of Brussels' spending.

Despite the new left-wing tide across Europe, Gerhard Schröder, the German Chancellor, and his team have left their partners in no doubt that Bonn aims to use its turn at the EU helm to assert German interests, especially over EU finances. Setting the tone for a presidency packed with deadlines for reform, German ministers hailed the birth of the single currency as a leap to a new era of shared policy-making. Joschka Fischer, the Foreign Minister, said the euro had promoted the EU to the "world league" economically and it must now follow politically. "Old and beloved habits are going to have to be thrown overboard," he said.

Oskar Lafontaine, the Finance Minister, caused a flurry again by making a direct link between Bonn's two most sensitive demands from the EU: tax harmonisation and a large cut in Germany's 60 per cent contribution to the EU's annual budget. "There is no way that Europe can expect Germany to pay the highest net contribution, but at the same time it does nothing against the unfair tax competition," Herr Lafontaine said.

The German insistence on bringing tax rates closer into line jars with

GERMANY

Tony Blair's claims to have laid to rest the explosive tax subject when he won agreement from Herr Schröder last month that there was no intention to set uniform tax rates. A more "level playing field" on taxes is seen by the Germans as a necessary next step in the deeper integration that comes with monetary union.

While no one is seeking uniform rates, the Germans, with backing from France and most of the other nine states in euroland, are determined to end the big discrepancies between tax regimes on business profits, savings income and energy use. Their first target is to close European "tax oases" such as Luxembourg and the Channel Islands, which are said to be used by Germans as havens for billions of pounds in unpaid taxes.

Increased tax harmony is seen by the Germans as part of their drive to absorb the Continent's crushing level of unemployment through co-ordinated measures across the EU. Herr Schröder promised this week to fight his national corner. "My job is to look out for Germany's interests," he said.

The break with the conciliatory style of Helmut Kohl and other past German leaders is setting the scene for fights over imminent big EU decisions. Rather than brokering compromise on common ground, Bonn is not flinching from stirring up trouble. The chief area is the new six-year spending plan, a fiendishly complicated package that will encompass reform on farm spending and national contributions to the EU budget, including the British rebate.

By June, Germany will also have presided over the choice of a new Commission President to replace Jacques Santer. There must be agreement on a high representative for foreign policy, a new post that amounts to Europe's first "foreign minister". Bonn is likely to push for a German to fill one of these posts but no plausible names are in circulation. Because northerners have held the top Brussels jobs in recent years, the current favourites for Commission President are southern politicians, including Professor Romano Prodi and Lamberto Dini, both former Italian Prime Ministers, and Antonio Guterres, the Portuguese Prime Minister.

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Clintons escape and hope the tide will turn

Ian Brodie reports from Washington on new moves in Senate to avoid a full trial

TOSSING a ball for Buddy, President Clinton strolled on the beach during a brief respite from his impeachment woes.

As his labrador romped in the surf, the President — in tracksuit and baseball cap — chatted to friendly tourists. Earlier his motorcade had driven past small groups of protesters, including one holding a large sign that said: "Feel our pain — resign now."

The Clintons are seeing in the new year as usual at the upmarket resort of Hilton Head, off the coast of South Carolina. They have joined a crowd of other high achievers assembled for the annual off-the-record Renaissance Weekend.

One bright spot for the family was that Chelsea Clinton accompanied her parents to the retreat, contrary to a statement from the White House press office that she would not attend. In tacit admission of their troubles, Mr Clinton and his wife Hillary were not asked to conduct the question-and-answer session on New Year's Eve as in years past, at which the impeachment issue was sure to have been raised.

"I thought there were more important things for them to address, so I didn't hassle them about it," said the Renaissance organiser, Linda LeSourd Lader, wife of Phil Lader, US Ambassador to Britain.

To add to the Clintons' embarrassment, Americans doing their weekend shopping will see a blaring tabloid headline at supermarket checkout counters: "Hillary Beats Up Bill". This is the report in the *National Enquirer* that an infuriated Mrs Clinton, broken by the strain of her husband's womanising, hit him so hard that she left a visible mark on his face and Secret Service agents had to separate them.

Despite the widespread visibility of the account, the White House press office continued to have no comment yesterday. Still, Mr and Mrs Clinton could take comfort that they remain top of Gallup's annual "most admired" poll of Americans and by a higher percentage than last year. He was named by 18 per cent of those surveyed, up from 14 per cent, and Mrs Clinton's rating doubled from 14 to 28 per cent. The Pope and Oprah Winfrey were runners-up.

While the Clintons were enjoying sunshine among old friends, snow was falling in Washington. The political climate, however, may be turning slightly less chilly. A paper was circulating in the Senate suggesting a swift test vote on whether the perjury and obstruction of justice charges against Mr Clinton warrant his removal from office.

Under this plan, prosecutors from the House Judiciary Committee would make a brief presentation to the Senate followed by a White House rebuttal. Senators would then be asked to vote on whether the allegations, if true, would justify removing the President.

The idea is that the vote would prevent a long trial by demonstrating that the Republicans could not muster the 67 votes needed to dismiss Mr Clinton. The Senate would then take up the proposal to reprimand him. Averting a trial did not sit well with Henry Hyde, the Republican chairman of the house committee, who said that the Senate's duty should not be short-circuited: "We must not act so hastily that the Senate does not have a fair opportunity to review a factual record."

On the flight to South Carolina, Mr Clint ambled to the rear of *Air Fe One* to collar Buddy. Repcrs asked if he had made anew year's resolutions. "I'm orking on it," the Presidentid.



President Clinton and his dog Buddy stroll on the beach at Hilton Head, South Carolina, where the presidential family is spendinew year

'Mayor for life' leaves with no regrets

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON



Barry: enjoyed life while Washington suffered

TOMORROW will be a day that many in Washington thought would never come — the moment Marion Barry finally steps down as Mayor of the American capital.

Once known as "mayor for life", Mr Barry, 62, was a disaster during most of the 16 years he held the job.

He padded the city payroll with thousands of patronage jobs, was incapable of fixing the simplest of municipal chores, and gained notoriety when an FBI sting caught him smoking crack.

Mr Barry was a night owl who cruised the city's clubs with his police bodyguards. He took junkets overseas. His name was linked to a variety of women. And all the while city services grew worse.

Eventually, Congress and President Clinton stripped him of power. Using their authority over the federal district, they created a control board to tackle the morass, including budget deficits, a dysfunctional city hall, inept schools and a scandal-prone police force. The board pulled the city back from the brink and now its former chief financial officer, Anthony Williams, will be taking over as Mayor.

Mr Barry saw no evil at his final, wistful, press conference. "I've been a good mayor," he said. "I have no regrets." He vowed to write an autobiography to "tell my side of history". Authorities have begun an investigation into whether tens of thousands of dollars of city money were diverted to pay for a gala to celebrate Mr Barry's tenure.

US closes embassy in Tel Aviv

Jerusalem: The US Embassy in Israel was closed yesterday after an anonymous warning that a bomb would be detonated inside the offices in Tel Aviv (Ross Dunn writes). Edward Walker, the ambassador, ordered the closure on US security service recommendations. It is thought that an attack may have been planned by militant Islamic groups because of the US and British bombings of Iraq.

Mir comrades break opei the cognac to wish the worldwell

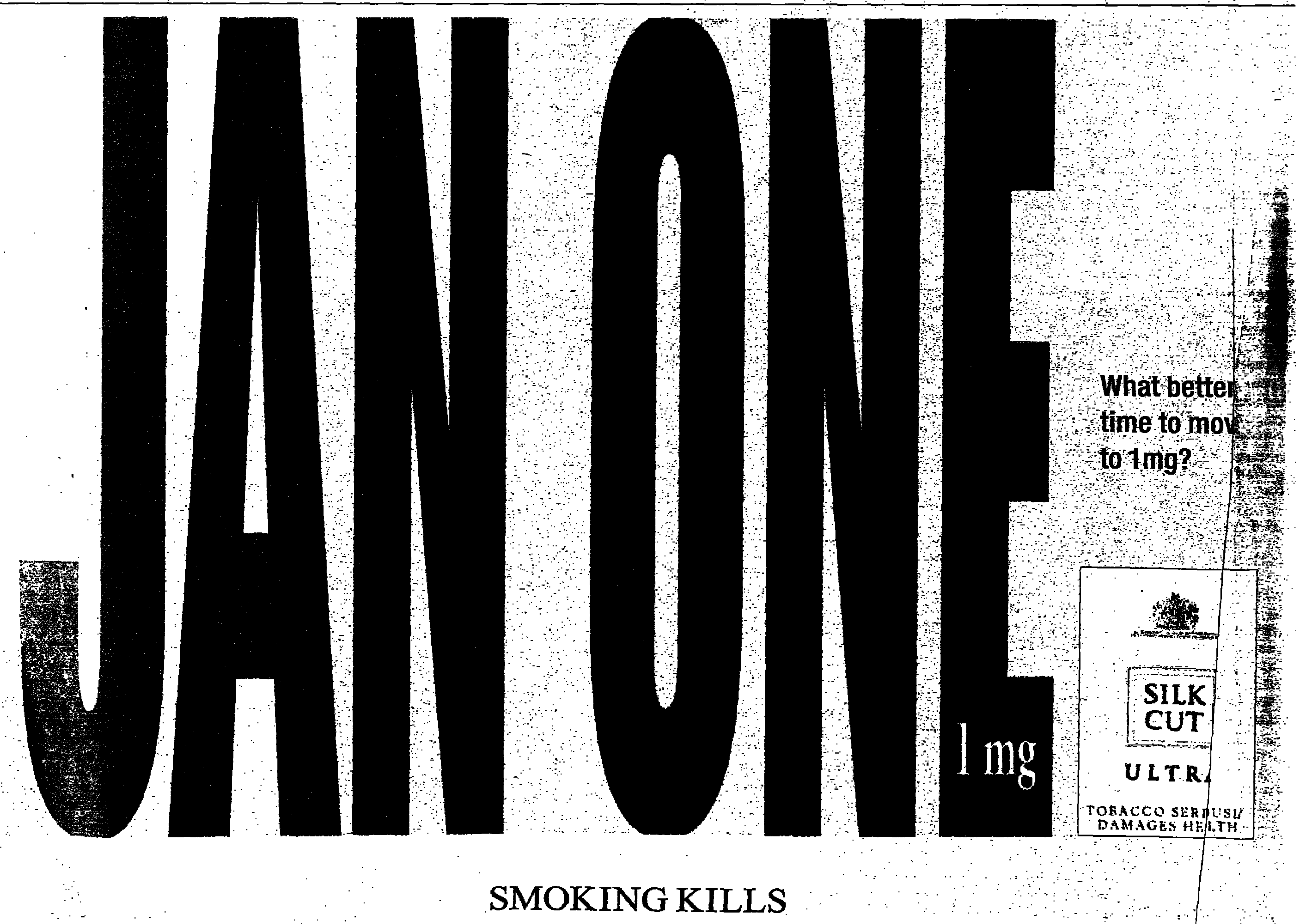
FROM ANNA BLUNDY IN MOSCOW

COSMONAUTS on the Mir space station will be celebrating the new year — Russia's most important holiday — around a miniature artificial tree 250 miles above the earth.

This will be Sergei Avdeyev's third new year in space, and New Year's Day is both his 43rd birthday and his 500th day in orbit. He and Gennadi Padalka are not due to return to Earth until the end of February at the earliest. Their tiny, decorated tree will add an air of seasonal splendour to the pair's New Year's Day satellite address. They will also have a midnight two-way celebratory link-up with their families to detract from the extreme isolation of life in space.

But Valeri Lyndin, of the *Flight Control Centre*, says the two men will not be able to raise the traditional glass of Russian champagne to their loved ones because carbonated drinks arerbidden. "The little bubbles at out and get everywhere," kays. Theoretically, he addlaughing, the men will not drinking any alcohol at all.

In reality, t is new year and the crew Russian. In February 199JS astronauts on Mir were ggered to see their Russian ceagues breaking out the coac after successfully putti out a fire on board. It is a tly kept secret that the Russis have drunk cognac in spacince 1977.



SMOKING KILLS

Chief Medical Officers' Warning

1 mg Tar 0.1 mg Nicotine

هكذا من الإهمال

Son sues rail firm over Auschwitz

The French state railway is accused of collaborating in wartime deaths, writes **Ben Macintyre** in Paris

A JEWISH Frenchman whose parents were deported by train and murdered at Auschwitz in the Second World War is suing the state-owned French railway for alleged "crimes against humanity".

French railworkers of the Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer (SNCF) have been celebrated as Resistance fighters. But the lawsuit launched by Jean-Jacques Fraenkel, the first of its kind, has questioned that heroic image by claiming that the rail company collaborated in the deportations to Nazi death camps.

M Fraenkel is already suing the State for "receiving stolen goods" — valuables taken from his parents — but he has extended the suit to include SNCF, which was nationalised in 1938. He claims that his father, a surgeon and holder of the Légion d'honneur, and mother, who became a Resistance worker, were taken to the death camps in French trains and the state rail company "collaborated in the deportations without any individual or collective act of opposition".

M Fraenkel, 67, who also holds Canadian citizenship, acknowledges that individual railworkers performed acts of great heroism during the war, but he insists that the company did nothing to prevent the deportation of French Jews.

"There were, it is true, railworkers who were deported and shot, SNCF employees who resisted. But it should not be forgotten that there were hundreds of trains which transported Jews like so much freight to the concentration camps," M Fraenkel said. "It must be officially recognised that the SNCF was one of the tools used by the Nazis to exterminate 80,000 French Jews."

The judge examining M Fraenkel's claims against the State is also likely to take over the complaint against SNCF which could face an avalanche of similar claims from Holocaust victims. "The SNCF knew the intolerable conditions these people faced on the cattle trains," M Fraenkel said, pointing out that the company's bureaucrats organised the train convoys.

Roger Fraenkel, M Fraenkel's father, was among 743 wealthy Jews taken to Auschwitz in 1941, soon after the Nazi occupation of France.

His mother fled to Nice, but was betrayed and sent to Auschwitz in 1943, leaving M Fraenkel and his younger sister as orphans. The family apartment was looted under the anti-Jewish legislation.

"By operating trains of deported Jews using French staff, the SNCF took part, alongside the French administration and other private companies, in a crime against humanity," M Fraenkel alleges in a lawsuit which the Paris prosecutor's office confirmed was "unprecedented".

The French railworker or *cheminot* enjoys an almost mythical status. That is likely to be shattered if M Fraenkel proves that the company and its wartime staff played a role in one of the worst crimes in history.

☐ **Vienna:** Holocaust survivor Simon Wiesenthal, who helped to track down and bring to justice 1,100 Nazi war criminals, celebrated his 90th birthday here yesterday with his wife Cyla and daughter Pauline.

Mr Wiesenthal was born in Buczacz, now in Ukraine, in 1908 and during the second world war was interned in a dozen Nazi German concentration camps before being liberated from Mathausen in Austria by US troops in 1945.

After the war he started his pursuit of former Nazi war criminals from his Jewish Documentation Centre. *(AFP)*



TONY GENTILE / REUTERS

Father Giuseppe Puglisi, who was shot dead in 1983 outside his home in a poor district of Palermo, Sicily. The Vatican announced yesterday that the priest, who was a suspected Mafia victim, will be beatified during a ceremony this year

Papal blessings to cost 25% more

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

THE Vatican said yesterday that it was increasing by a quarter today the cost of the special papal blessings that are sold under licence to pilgrims in authorised shops around St Peter's Square in order to be able to devote more funds to the poor.

Archbishop Oscar Rizzato, head of the Apostolic Alms Office which helps the Pope to minister to the poor, said the Holy See hopes that the increased price to the shops, 5,000 lire (£1.80) instead of 4,000 lire, would be borne by the retailers so that pilgrims do not have to pay extra for the spiritual souvenirs.

"The increase was decided because of the growing difficulty of coping with the ever greater number of poor people who ask for help from the Holy Father," he said.

The blessings are sold in the form of certificates bearing a picture of the Pope. Counter prices range from 18,000 lire upwards.

NEWS IN BRIEF

America to resume China rights talks

Beijing: America is to resume human rights dialogue with China, it was announced yesterday, despite Beijing's crackdown on dissent. The dialogue, discontinued in 1995, will resume based on initiatives from last year's summit between Presidents Jiang Zemin and Clinton, said a US Embassy spokesman in Beijing. In recent days, China has punished four high-profile democracy activists with stiff prison sentences and Ma Zhe, a dissident poet, was jailed for seven years on subversion charges.

The embassy would not comment on whether specific cases of jailed dissidents would be raised, only stating that "the agenda for the talks is still being negotiated". A Chinese delegation will travel to Washington to resume the talks. *(AFP)*

UN Angola staff leave

Luanda: The United Nations has started evacuating its staff from Huambo, Angola's second-largest city, after a rebel artillery barrage that killed at least eight people. The International Red Cross said 20 wounded civilians were admitted to hospital after an hour-long bombardment of the city by Unita's long-range artillery. Thousands of refugees fleeing fighting in the countryside have converged on Huambo in recent weeks. *(AP)*

Australia wanted Bomb

Canberra: Australia, a vocal opponent of nuclear weapons proliferation, considered building up to 30 atomic bombs a year as recently as 1968, according to declassified Cabinet documents released by the National Archives. They show that John Gorton's conservative Government supported the principle of non-proliferation during the United Nations treaty debate as long as it did not block Australia's options to build a bomb at some stage. *(AP)*

Mob injures four nuns



Delhi: A boy takes part in a demonstration in the Indian capital against attacks on Christians and churches in the western state of Gujarat, where four nuns and two priests were earlier injured when mobs attacked a Catholic prayer hall. The attack was the tenth on the Christian community since Christmas Day, officials said. Christian activists blame Hindu extremists, but no one has claimed responsibility for the violence. *(Reuters)*

Child killings arrest

Bogotá: Colombia has reported the capture of Pedro Pablo Ramirez, suspected of murdering 29 children whose bodies were found in November in two ditches in the city of Pereira. Investigators were also trying to determine if he was involved in other murders of children that have taken place in recent years, officials said. Señor Ramirez was arrested using a false name in Pereira, 195 miles east of Bogotá. *(AFP)*

Bosnian Serb choice



Banja Luka: In an attempt to end a political deadlock, President Poplasen of Republika Srpska, the Bosnian Serb territory, named Brane Miljus, right, a moderate, as Prime Minister-designate after a hardliner failed to win parliamentary approval. Mr Miljus is a member of the pro-Western Party of Independent Social Democrats run by Milorad Dodik, the current Prime Minister. The parliament must approve Mr Miljus. *(AP)*

Rebels beaten back

Freetown: West African peacekeepers beat back a rebel attack on the outskirts of the Sierra Leonean capital, Freetown, driving them from the garrison town of Hastings, a spokesman for the peacekeeping force said. Residents fleeing the town, 12 miles from the impoverished former British colony's capital, said that the rebels had attacked overnight. Earlier, the Government denied that rebels were in control of the northern region. *(Reuters)*



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As warm as a pickled pepper



TIM BARNETT

Slope off in style and comfort: Snow + Rock has concentrated on a range of snug and sensible suits, and the pink Killy, £379, is a classic

Warm, windproof, long-lasting — and good for posing. **Penny Wark** searches for the perfect ski suit

There is something intensely comforting about skiing with a group of friends who wear the same ski-gear every year. Since we last skied together, bombs have been dropped, politicians have encountered banana skins and trauma has gripped the City, but as we head for the first lift in Val-d'Isère next week, we will look pretty much the same as we did last January. It is like entering a loop in which time stands still.

Displaying scant regard for the vagaries of sporting fashion is also a good excuse for making a ski-suit last at least a decade (as the Prince of Wales has obviously concluded). No one would be able to pick you out on the slopes if you changed hue, you claim, so why swap the battered burgundy one-piece for something less faded? The chums are an obliging lot and at least one of them will slap you warmly on the back and insist that they wouldn't recognise you in any other colour.

So you put to the back of your mind the obvious truth that there are two ways to recognise friends at a million paces. I prefer to think that it is my soignée appearance that makes me identifiable, but secretly I know that it is skiing style (or lack of it) that enables companions to pick me out from 50 others hurtling down La Grande Motte. Colour is the secondary factor.

Nevertheless, it is with some reluctance that I have come to accept that the Head suit bought on impulse during a former life is past its prime. The moment of truth came last year when I realised that in spite of vests (one sleeveless, one long-sleeved), long johns (two pairs) and all manner of poloneck tops, I was still numb with cold. I invested £70 in a delicious Eider fleece top and matching long johns, which could not have been toastier (I have been wearing them at home ever since), but even these did not remove the need for a warmer outer layer.

The search began for something warm, windproof and waterproof, and with a reasonable pose factor thrown in. I wanted a one-piece, because, inconvenient as they are at lunchtime, they are extremely snug and, unlike jacket and trousers, they don't ever come apart.

I was also looking for a tall collar that would, when zipped up, come halfway up my face, sleeves that fall below my wrists, pockets to take credit cards and tissues without spoiling the line of the suit, and a rescue reflector. All that and a neat, simple design in a colour that will endure another decade without looking completely tragic.

If only it were that easy. I rapidly discovered that many of this year's suits fall into two categories: vile colours (do you really want to look like a banana?) and the pseudo-sporty effect that threatens to make you look like a teenager on heat. It is a look that is seriously incomplete without a cavalier disregard for other skiers, and the ability to grunt "Dunno, wasn't me", or "I've dropped my gloves off the lift" at five-minute intervals. Not for grown-ups, in my view.

This is one of the traps that C & A has tumbled into this season. It may be famous for its skiwear but its current range will satisfy only youths or those, possibly with a fondness for *Saturday Night Fever*, who like to ski in Lurex. This, I admit, had never occurred to me.

But persevere and you discover that Snow + Rock has concentrated on snug and sensible suits — the Killy one-piece in pink (£379) is a classic, and I was particularly taken by the purse slotted on to its belt. The snag is the colour range: if you choose white, what happens when you lose a chunk of oil-drenched *chèvre chaud* down your front at the first lunch? You buy another suit presumably. The same goes for a fabulous cream suit by Belfe, trimmed in fake fur, at £329.

Tenson has a simple black suit at £269, and Brugi a red one with a fleece collar at a remarkable £129. But too many of this year's women's suits are laden with faux gold buckles and fastenings, and even fur.

At Lillywhites I was melting with desire at the sight of Bogner's exquisite ice blue one-piece, with its fur collar and cuffs, until an assistant explained that they were silver fox, which apparently justified the £1,500 price. I will learn to live without it on both counts.

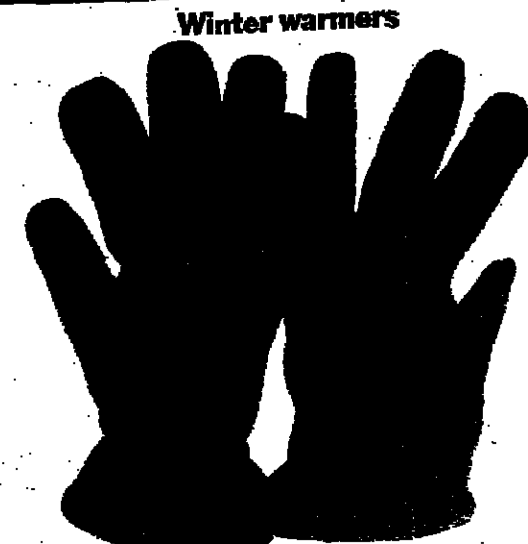
I found my suit at Canyon Mountain Sports in Leicester. By Trespass, it is simple, warm, has a grey fleece collar and, at £89.99, was such good value that I felt obliged to ask what was wrong with it.

For my friends' information, it is red. "You look like a tomato," said one of the teenagers. When they grow up and learn to be tactful, they will realise that "red hot chilli pepper" would be much more polite.

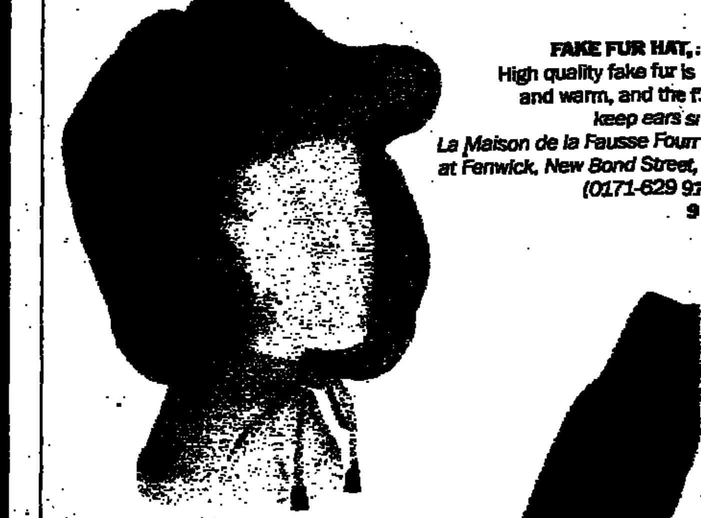


SIX OF THE BEST

Winter warmers

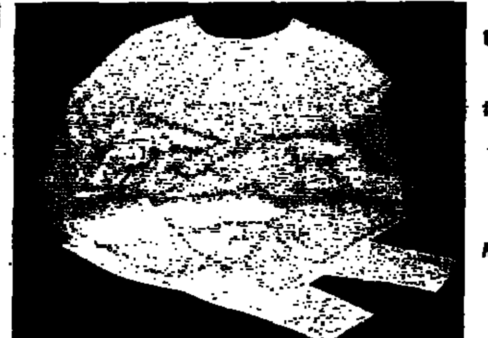


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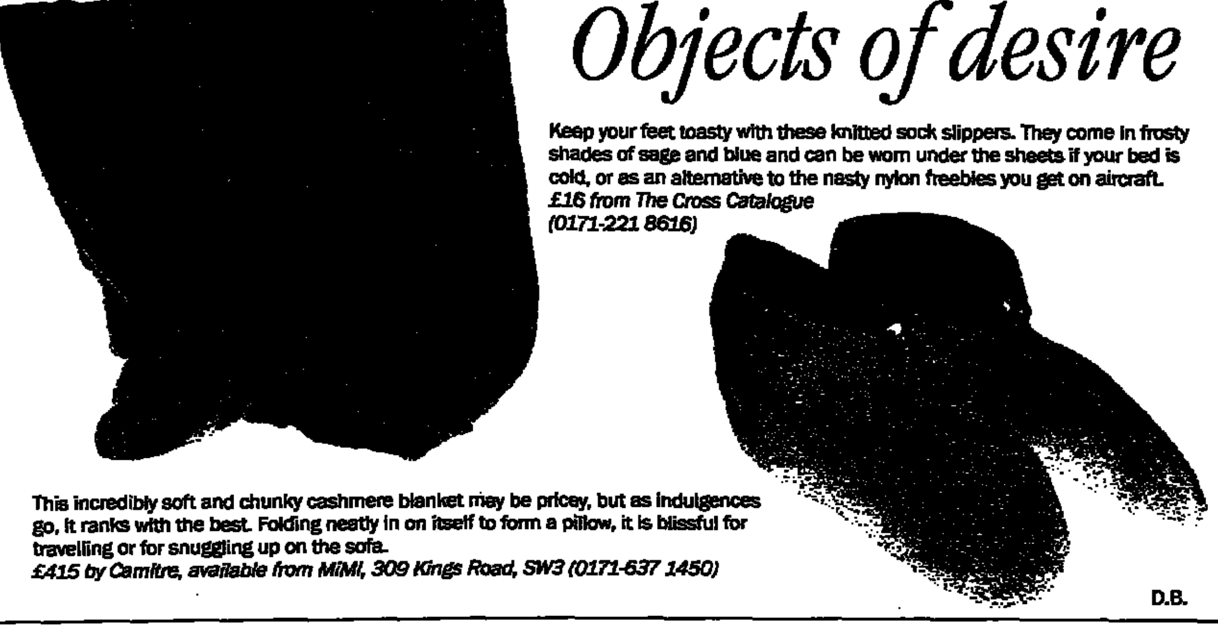


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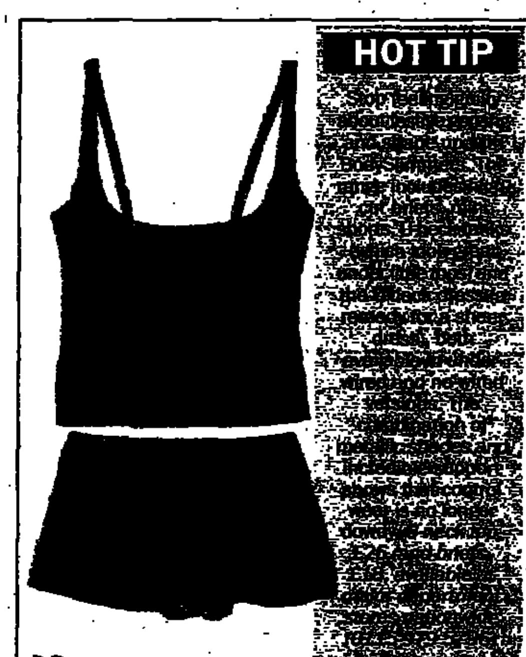


Objects of desire

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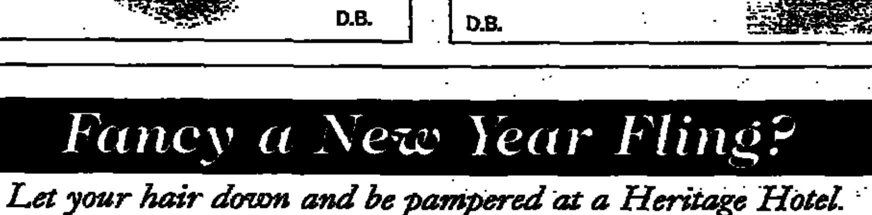
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HOT TIP

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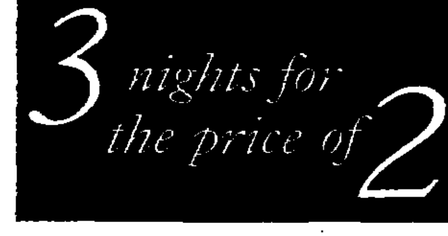




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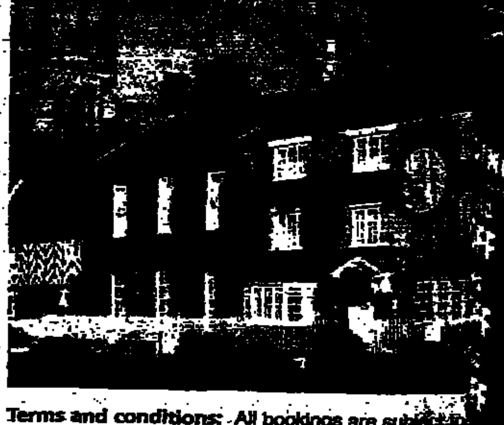


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'I'm not desperate to be a superstar'

Sean Bean, the Sheffield welder turned actor, is careful not to sever his roots. Interview by **Grace Bradberry**



PETER NICHOLS

"I think I've been misunderstood," says Bean. "I might have misled people. A lot of what I say is tongue-in-cheek but some people actually believe it, which is worrying"

He is arguably one of Britain's sexiest actors, makes a fine villain and has the nation's best-known bottom. His face is unusual but attractive: slitty-eyed, roughened, but with a fine bone structure supporting cheeks that look somehow well worn — as if they've been punched and kissed in equal measure.

Waiting to meet Sean Bean, you can't help but have expectations, many of them prompted by his performance as Mellors in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. When I saw him, even at 20 yards, he was something different: sitting hunched in a leather jacket on designer furniture at the swanky One Aldwych, a bit awkward, as though minding his manners. Then there was that unruly, spiky smile, the sort that American dental surgeons would "fix".

Bean is famous for being unreconstructed. He has long worn his upbringing on a Sheffield council estate like a bulletproof vest: a working-class chauvinist whose second marriage fell apart because, according to his former wife Melanie Hill (Aveline in *Bread*), he watched too much football, spent too long in the pub and let his clothes lie where they fell; a man given to disparaging comparisons between his mother's and his wife's Yorkshire puddings.

"Yeah?" he says at the mention of the Yorkshire puddings, and narrows his eyes. I wonder if he's about to lose it — he is also known for his temper — but he softens. "I think I've been misunderstood," he says. "I might have misled people. A lot of what I say is tongue-in-cheek. Some people actually believe it, which is quite worrying."

It is easy to patronise Bean, and plenty have done. He has chosen to keep the regional accent, which makes him different given that so many actors prefer to bury theirs. "I could lose it," he says, "but I think, why lose something as good as that?" He'll come out with clichés and homilies: "You've just got to keep your feet on the ground." But to get stuck at that is to miss the broader Bean.

> He has the nation's best-known bottom

He is surprisingly sensitive, introspective, and there's an interior dialogue that is articulated through intonation, furrowing of the brow and half-snarls rather than words. The deal that has been struck in advance is that there will be no questions about his private life, but it becomes clear that this won't work because he doesn't seem to have developed a public life.

He talks about filming *Bravo Two Zero*, his latest television drama, in which he plays the SAS soldier Andy McNab, captured and tortured by the Iraqis during the Gulf War. Spending months in the desert with "a bunch of lads" helped with the portrayal of a tightly knit SAS team, he says, "except that we were going home to the hotel every night having beers. Ha ha ha."

So who are "the lads" back in London? He conjures up one friend, a writer, with whom he occasionally drinks in the West End, "but we don't make a thing of it". Fashionable London life is not his thing either. Finally he says: "My wife Abby, she's got a baby of four weeks. So I mean we're not really going to that many parties at the moment." Abby is Abigail Cruttenden, his third wife, the privately educated daughter of an advertising executive, whom he met filming *Sharpe*. They married just over a year ago and live in Belsize Park, North London.

Evie Natasha is his third daughter. His two older daughters, Lorna and Molly, live with their mother, Melanie Hill, whom he met at RADA and stayed with for 16 years, although they were married only for the last six. She threw him out. It has been a stormy two years. In his own words: "I've got divorced, married, had a baby and moved house. That's enough for me."

Overall, his marriage record isn't as bad as it sounds. He was only 20 when he married his first wife, a hairdresser, just before going to drama school. She speaks warmly about him and still pops round to his mother's for cups of tea.

The drubbing he got when he and Hill separated is not something we talk about but sometimes he seems to be addressing it indirectly, as when he talks resentfully of being portrayed as "this mad, sort of fanatical, sort of laddish football fan, and even if you wanted to be like that, you couldn't be".

He says he doesn't get to see Sheffield United play so much any more: "There's other things in my life as well." Living a middle-class existence in London, spending months on film sets, shooting Hollywood movies with the likes of Melanie Griffith (*Stormy Monday*), Harrison Ford (*Patriot Games*) and Robert De Niro (*Ronin*), he can't help but change.

Bean worries about that, even as he wants it to be acknowledged. "I don't like being clichéd, one of the lads, northern. It diminishes what you are to some extent." But he has been careful not to sever his roots, and at 39 still drives to Sheffield to see old friends. "Of course I'm an actor; they're plumbers, welders and carpenters. There *is* a distinction. But we're friends."

Bean left his Sheffield comprehensive with two O levels, an awareness that he was attractive to girls and a bit of skill at playground brawls — "a kickaround and a thump, you know what I mean?" He worked briefly for his father as a welder before going to art school. He tried three different colleges, and at the third discovered the drama department.

"My family were bemused. I said, 'I'm going to be an actor.' I think they thought, 'Well, he wanted to be in a band last week, he wanted to be an artist the week before'. When I got into RADA they were supportive."

He describes the acceptance letter as "like a ticket to another life", which is odd when he hangs on to the old life so carefully. He nods. "That's right. I think occasionally, maybe, that the downside of a close community is that you can't sometimes function as an individual. You have to break away into a situation where you don't feel inhibited.

"The strange thing is that it's come full cycle because then you go through all that, but you have to come back. It wasn't a matter of saying goodbye, I don't want anything to do with you. It was just bye for now. You learn a lot, you come back and you learn a lot more."

Bean's attachment to his roots isn't a stubborn, moral stance; it's about nurturing his acting talent, which is considerable. "I think I'm pretty good," he acknowledges. "But I've tried not to let it go to my head. You can cut off what you set out to do in the first place, which was to play ordinary people. I hope I haven't done that anyway."

It is hard getting Sean Bean to lighten up. He devotes most of his energy to keeping the barrier in place. You get the impression he both likes women and derives quite a lot of humour from them but that he is scared of expressing this.

"I'd hate to think of myself as entrenched in my male beliefs," he says. "I'd like to think that I'd change to the people that are around, the people that I'm with. Not be a yes man, but adapt." Above all, he doesn't want to seem grand. He won't go to premieres except his own, and although he has made several movies he isn't a movie star. Wouldn't moving to Hollywood fuel his career? "It's difficult with America because I've got my family here," he says. "I've never really capitalised on the success I've had there — which I should have done — but I have no regrets. I don't want to be massive. It's nice to do great work, but I'm not desperate to be some superstar."

We talk about privacy. Isn't it tough when people know so much more about him than he does about them? "Well, if people recognise me I don't go 'What are you looking at me for?' Nine times out of ten they have seen me before."

All of him. And there are plenty of nice bits, besides the bottom.

● Bravo Two Zero *is screened in two parts on BBC1 on Sunday, January 3, and Monday, January 4. The video was released on BBC Worldwide on December 28.*





Zen and the art of blading

Mary Ann Sieghart promotes a perfect form of transport

For weeks I wobbled. Within a month I was motoring. Now a whole year has passed, and I am almost an expert. It was for Christmas 1997 that my husband gave me a pair of Rollerblades. And ever since, I have enjoyed a lasting enthusiasm that happens also to be a brilliant mode of transport. Short of parasailing down Piccadilly, I can't imagine what could be more thrilling.

After dropping my children off at school in Victoria I can now Rollerblade to work in Wapping in 45 minutes flat. It takes only a little longer than the Tube. True, I can't read *The Times* on my travels. But what the Tube does not offer is glorious views of the Thames, fresh(ish) air, a feeling of exhilaration as you pick up speed and a great sense of achievement when you finally arrive, glowing and triumphant, at your desk.

This year's Christmas present is a Discman, so that I can listen to CDs while I skate. Dub reggae and funk are the best, as I send my blades whooshing to the beat. Forget jogging or the gym. This is that elusive discovery: a form of exercise that is actually fun.

> 'Have you got a licence for those things, Miss?'

It is as hard as it looks, to begin with. But, if you ever ice-skated or rollerskated as a child, your limbs already know the basic score. Stopping is a lot more difficult than starting: on my first foray on blades, I had to grab a passing lamppost and execute a couple of spins around it in order to prevent myself skidding into the traffic. Unfortunately the traffic happened to be a minibus full of policemen who fell about laughing at this ridiculous spectacle. The police driver turned on his loudspeaker and broadcast my humiliation to the world: "Have you got a licence for those, Miss?" he teased over the Tannoy.

A lesson later, though, and I was beginning to get the hang of the brake. We bumped into Hugh Sackwild, an Oxford physics graduate turned Rollerblading expert, teaching someone else in Hyde Park, and engaged him for a family instruction the next day. He showed us the various methods of turning, stopping and dealing with kerbs. And there was the constant reminder: "Bend your knees."

As with skiing, this is the most important, but also the hardest, instruction to remember. You instinctively straighten your legs when danger looms; you have to re-educate your reflexes. But this is not the only resemblance with skiing. At its best, on a smooth, flat surface with no cars or pedestrians and a beautiful view, you can work up a speed and a rhythm which give you just the same sense of euphoria as a really good run down a piste — for a fraction of the price.

I admit that Bournemouth is hardly St Moritz, and the *après-blade* leaves something to be desired. But, when I took my skates down there for the Tory party conference, and set off on a crisp Indian summer's morning for an hour's exercise along a deserted promenade, I wondered why we had spent so much money on a trip to the Alps that spring. The beach was a many-mile-long sandy crescent, the sea was sequin-sparkling in the sun and the grassy hills surged up from the shore. No one else was about, save the occasional jogger putting far more work into his mode of transport than I, swooshing silkily past.

Few other forms of exercise can equal such elation. Skiing is up there. Galloping is great. And tacking close to the wind when a gust tips the boat almost perpendicular to the water, hits the spot too. But Rollerblading is the only one of these that you can do in a city, with minimal kit, at low expense. How many people can commute to work on skis, on horseback or in a dinghy?

What is more, it gives you exactly the right amount of exercise. Riding and sailing may be fun, but they don't get you very fit. Jogging, on the other hand, is too much work; you feel you may collapse at any moment with a coronary. Cycling is great, but dangerous in London, where buses and taxis try to make a kerb sandwich of you. Rollerblading is about as energetic as cycling but — relatively — safer.

At any rate, you do it on the pavement, rather than in the road, and you wear protective gear. I have so far suffered nothing worse than a rather undignified graze to my chin. I have not yet bumped into a pedestrian: as long as you slow down, it is no more hazardous to others than jogging past them. But there is the endless hassle of kerbs, wonky paving stones and roads to cross. Except on a few stretches — the edge of St James's Park, the very occasional smooth section of the Thames Path — it is hard to build up the all-important rhythm and speed.

Our whole family goes Rollerblading at weekends. We have tried Battersea Park, we have tried Hyde Park, we have tried the riverside in Hammersmith. We have yet to discover that perfect, Bournemouth-like nirvana where there is a long, even surface on which you can glide rather than judder (rough surfaces make your whole body vibrate, a feeling my daughter describes as "fizzy lemonade").

So I appeal to John Reid, the Transport Minister. This must be the most eco-friendly form of transport. It is silent, non-polluting and uses no energy other than our own. It does not clutter up the roads, as cycles do. And it is beautiful to watch. Please, Mr Reid, allow us a few long, smooth paths in London, perhaps alongside the river. Grant me my modest New Year's wish, and you can even call it an "integrated Rollerblading strategy for the millennium" if you like.

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Lords on camera

Anthony Howard finds the BBC quaintly feudal in its approach to the filming of an outmoded institution

The House of Lords has in recent years done pretty well out of television. In a way, it has deserved to. The authorities there allowed the cameras in a full four years before they were admitted to the Commons; and in that strange, hiatus period — from January 1985 to November 1989 — the TV viewing public took quite a fancy to the courtly manners and stately rhythms of Lords debates.

Later on, of course, after the novelty had worn off and the regular coverage of actual proceedings became more intermittent, there were a few hiccups along the way. Their Lordships did not much care for — indeed, a number of them jumped up and down in anger about it — a *Cutting Edge* documentary shown on Channel 4 in 1992 which dared to suggest that some at least of them saw the exalted body to which they belonged as a convenient means of indoor relief.

Particularly regrettable in such eyes was the prominence the programme gave to an hereditary peer — a former bus driver from Brighton — who could hardly believe his luck in being able to scoop up something like £100 a day from his *per diem* allowance whenever the Lords was sitting. This unfortunate peer was also thought to have let the side down by waxing too lyrically on the delights of the tuck-shop — reserving his particular praise for the subsidised afternoon tea ("crumpets, muffins, teacake, something rather naughty with cream") served by motherly souls in the Lords dining room.

Almost equally unpopular was a *Dispatches* programme, again made for Channel 4, some three years later. This one went so far as to allege that one or two Noble Lords were "on the take" so far as outside lobbying interests were concerned. The charge was made before the full blossoming of the "sleaze" allegations in the Commons, so it lacked the impact it might otherwise have had. Nevertheless, especially as the Upper House has rather laxer regulations in this area than now pertain in the Other Place, it did succeed in leaving a rather nasty taste — one that *Private Eye* has done its best to exploit with its recent running feature on "Lords for Hire".

It may, therefore, have been with mixed feelings that peers of all parties recently learnt that the BBC was preparing a series of three programmes under the collective (and to some, no doubt, menacing) title of *Inside the Lords*. Having had an advance look at two of them, I can safely say that any apprehensions can be laid to rest. Beautifully shot and marvellously evocative, this particular series would seem to have as its aim the preservation in aspic of a notably quaint and eccentric British institution.

No one watching the first two programmes would get much idea of the arguments currently going on over the future of the Second Chamber. Admittedly, Lord Richard, the former government Leader in the Lords, is allowed to mumble away a bit about the anomaly of having heredity as the basis of any legislative body, but his voice is soon muffled by that of Viscount Tenby. This grandson of Lloyd George emerges as a traditionalist of traditionalists. "It's not something you can go and trumpet around outside," he avers at one stage, "but my own very strong view is that, when all the huffing and puffing has died down, I doubt very much you'll have a better chamber than you've got now ... but who cares about that when you have the great goddess of democracy dangled in front of everyone?" (His intensely democratic grandfather, who once famously spoke of the House of Lords as consisting of "a body of men chosen at random from the ranks of the unemployed", must, one assumes, be turning in his grave.)

> Courtly manners and stately rhythms preserved in aspic

What this series lacks, in fact, is any feeling for history. Of course, in its antique shop version — the absurd "Garter" and all the other ridiculous bits of flummery — tradition permeates the screen. But there is a distinct diffidence (especially notable in Clive Anderson's surprisingly anodyne commentary) about tackling any of the issues that the history of the House of Lords has thrown up over the past century and more. How, for example, did it come about that the three Reform Bills of the 19th century, while progressively widening the popular franchise for the Commons, should have left the far greater democratic scandal of the House of Lords invulnerable and intact? It was certainly not what anyone expected at the time — even in 1832 it was generally assumed that, as an hereditary assembly, the House of Lords would be lucky to last a decade. Yet for the rest of the century the Upper House not only survived but flourished. Why?

The answer would seem to be that the hereditary peers genuinely did at that stage represent an Estate of the Realm — broadly, the landed interest. Towards the end of the century they were fortunate, too, in finding an improbable ally in W. E. Gladstone. From the moment he first embraced the Home Rule cause in 1885-86, driving out the great Whig families from the Liberal Party in the process and, as a consequence, turning the Lords into virtually a one-party chamber, he provided it with almost a licence to challenge the Commons. Even so, it took a good deal of brass-neck arrogance for the House of Lords in 1893 to defeat the second Home Rule Bill — already carried through all its stages in the Commons — by an almost totalitarian majority of 419-41.

The significant fact, though, is that it did so with impunity — and the House of Lords has since gone on to establish a pretty shrewd pattern of conduct over its choice of populist issues on which to confront the Commons. Yet it is hard to see even that as a sufficient explanation for its astonishing record of survival — at least since the Parliament Act passed under the Asquith Government in 1911.

In its preamble that first piece of legislation to put a bridle on the Lords gave a specific pledge that all hereditary peers would be removed from the Upper House "within the term of the present Government" — which, but for the First World War, would have meant by 1915 at the latest. Yet, miraculously, the hereditary male element remained wholly undiluted — and totally undefiled by women — until 1958 when Harold Macmillan's essentially cosmetic Life Peerages Act introduced not only the "dayboys", as they characteristically came to be called, but — much more important — women, for the first time, into the Second Chamber. (Did nobody, one can't help wondering, think it odd that, while female MPs could sit in the Commons from 1918 onwards, not even hereditary peeresses in their own right were admitted to the Lords until more than 40 years later — and even then the first one of them was obliged initially to take her seat as a life peeress?)

The sad truth is that nothing so vividly illustrates the inertia principle at the heart of British politics than the way in which the Lords have successfully withstood reform throughout this century. After the Kaiser had enabled the hereditary peers to make good their escape from Asquith and Lloyd George, they faced only one other serious challenge. That came in the shape of the Parliament (No 2) Bill of 1969. The product of the inventive mind of Dick Crossman, this immensely complex and detailed measure never really stood a chance of getting on to the statute book — least of all when an unholy alliance of Michael Foot and Enoch Powell resolved to fight it line-by-line on the floor of the House of Commons. After consuming to no avail 12 days of parliamentary time, the Bill was eventually and humiliatingly abandoned by a Labour Government headed by Harold Wilson.

The next few weeks should show whether Tony Blair is made of sterner stuff. But the approach march to the battle has also revealed something else — that, despite all the changes made by Sir John Birt to its structure, the BBC remains an Establishment organisation at heart. Present its most talented film-makers with even the most antiquated and outdated part of our national fabric — and their automatic instinct will be to celebrate it with touchingly nostalgic pictures and deferential feudal echoes.

Inside the Lords *starts on BBC2 at 8pm on Sunday.*

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Beware the euro yes-men

Paul Sykes calls for a frank debate on further unification

As the euro is launched into uncertain waters, those who wish Britain to participate in economic and monetary union are already making predictable noises about how we cannot afford to be left out for long. The language of urgency is being deployed to prevent rational scrutiny of a project that will have profound consequences for Europe.

It is no surprise that those who advocate the abolition of the pound are unwilling to deal with the matter candidly. The apostles of unification have often given the impression that the democratic process is, in the short term, an inconvenience to be circumvented and, in the long term, an inappropriate mechanism for decision-making in the new Europe. Hence Claude Cheysson, the former Foreign Minister of France: "The construction of Europe has taken place because of intergovernmental co-operation. We worked the normal democratic structures and that is why we succeeded."

Nor should one assume that such attitudes are confined to the other side of the Channel. Hugo Young's book, *This Blessed Plot*, is littered with examples of cynical evasions on the part of British politicians and civil servants in their efforts to propel us into an ever-closer union.

The only reason the British people are to be given the opportunity to vote on the euro is because John Major sought to buy off Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party as the 1997 general election loomed. Determined not to be outflanked on the European issue, Labour followed suit. What is proclaimed as a virtuous safeguard was, for Tony Blair, a necessary evil. How Peter Mandelson and other pro-Euro strategists must wish that Mr Blair had avoided giving that pledge. Without it, there is little doubt Britain would be far further down the road to full participation in EMU.

As the referendum approaches it is becoming clear it will be a truly momentous decision. The tortuous relationship between Britain and the supranational entity that, through mental laziness and intellectual sleight of hand, we have learnt to call "Europe" will come to a resolution. To vote "no" would create an almost insurmountable obstacle to further British participation in the grand project of European unification. The other EU countries would see it as justification for divorce.

Yet saying "yes" would undermine, perhaps fatally, the legitimacy of our domestic democratic institutions. If workers in my native Yorkshire found their jobs were disappearing because of the desire of unaccountable bankers in Frankfurt to prevent "overheating" elsewhere in the Union, they would demand action from their elected politicians. How would they react if their MPs told them that there was nothing they could do? From this week interest rates are to be determined at an EU-wide level, for the supposed benefit of the European economy, and those charged with making such judgments cannot be sacked by anyone.

Soon tax will also be set at a European level, despite Mr Blair's protestations. Tax harmonisation is not only a logical development of EMU, it is the avowed objective of the Finance Ministers of France and Germany. Even income tax is on the table. Those commentators who insist that no one has even suggested a European income tax have obviously not been listening to the President of the European Parliament. Will the hard-pressed workers of Britain, white-collar and blue-collar alike, accept taxation without representation?

Issues of legitimacy and accountability stir deep passions. In Britain one can point to the introduction of the poll tax, the closing of the coalmines and the impact of Thatcherism on Scotland and Wales as examples of challenges to Westminster's right to lay down the law. It is impossible to govern without making hard choices and if these have a negative impact on people, it is vital that they accept the legitimacy of the politicians who have made the decisions and feel they can get rid of them. There is already resentment towards Brussels on the part of many Britons, even though only a small minority, notably our fishermen, have been harmed seriously by the EU.

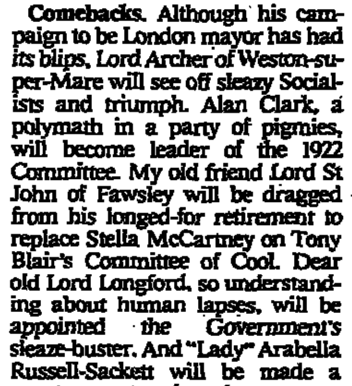
The United Kingdom has the fifth largest economy in the world. We also have a functioning democracy that has survived many tribulations. No one pretends we don't have problems, but they are not remotely of an order to compel us to abandon self-government.

For too long those who have sought, by fair means and foul, to secure British participation in the integration of Europe have been allowed to dodge the hard questions. Most of them know what they want — a de facto united states of Europe. If they have the honesty to declare that aim, we should respect their integrity while deploring their objectives and leave the British people to decide. However, should they choose to carry on with ever more implausible denials in the face of all the evidence, no quarter will be given.

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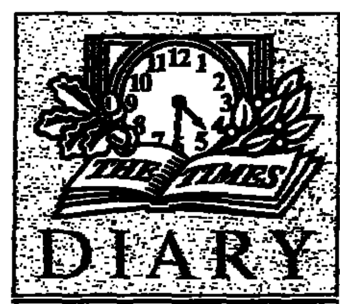
Support role



PETER MANDELSON has found solace with Kevin Spacey, the private Hollywood actor, I am delighted to learn. Wendy was first seen revelling in the company of Spacey, who has migrated from Los Angeles to the more delicate climes of London, at the relaunch party of the Old Vic in October, and the two have been close since. My butler Owen noted in his diary that the duo hit it off splendidly, but at the time I wondered if he had been at my gin again. But now Notting Hill chums of Mandelson, alarmed by his gloomy mood, are delighted that he has found light relief in the company of the charming American bachelor.

Spacey, who I am told won an Oscar for an entertainment entitled *The Usual Suspects*, is rather brighter than the usual Hollywood crowd (although he recently paired with Samuel L. Jackson in something called *The Negotiator*). He wowed aesthetes here with his portrayal of Hickey in the Almeida Theatre's production of *The Iceman Cometh* earlier this year, even rivalling Nicole Kidman in warming the seats of London's coldest theatre critics.

"I've sort of maintained a vow of silence since I've been here," whispers Spacey. "I've been kind of happy to be quiet. I really have had the time of my life here."



● *IS IT time the* Financial Times *was printed in German? As other British newspapers devoted generous column inches to the shoot-out in Yemen, which lead to the death of three British hostages, the FT's headline on Thursday bristled with patriotic concern: "Four Germans freed in Yemen".*

Manic mum

THE mother of the Duke of Edinburgh is to be the unlikely subject of a biography by Hugo Vickers, the royal author. Clearly feeling brave, the Royal Family gave him unprecedented access to private archive material at Windsor, Broadlands and Darmstadt.

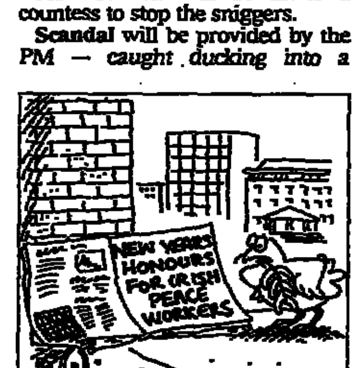
I just hope that the Duke likes the book. It will not be so discreet as obituaries, detailing how Princess Andrew of Greece, the sister of Lord Mountbatten, went into a Swiss sanatorium after a religious crisis. Nicknamed the "barmy nun", she spent the last years of her live wandering around Buckingham Palace in grey monastic full-flowing robe and coif. Quite why this needs to be raked over all these years on, I have little idea.

Blue year

GAZING into my Waterford crystal ball, I see a year of comebacks, dastardly deeds and the odd strange vanishing.

Comebacks. Although his campaign to be London mayor has had its blips, Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare will see off sleazy Socialists and triumph. Alan Clark, a polymath in a party of pigmies, will become leader of the 1922 Committee. My old friend Lord St John of Fawsley will be dragged from his longed-for retirement to replace Stella McCartney on Tony Blair's Committee of Cool. Dear old Lord Longford, so understanding about human lapses, will be appointed the Government's sleaze-buster. And "Lady" Arabella Russell-Sackett will be made a countess to stop the sniggers.

Scandal will be provided by the PM — caught ducking into a Geneva clinic to have his simian line removed. Regular readers will remember that my disclosure about what crossed Tony Blair's palm caused unkind chirologists to suggest that the PM was shifty, egotistical and quite possibly autistic. As the PM has off-loaded all other dodgy old baggage, I entirely expect him to avail himself of a plastic surgeon.



"What about me?"

Vanishing. The most amazing example will be the retirement from society of the delightful Father Michael Seed, Roman Catholic converter to the gentry, who will go off to meditate and boil stew in a Scottish croft. He will be replaced as aide to Cardinal Basil Hume by his friend Peter Stringfellow, who has a similar eye for publicity that will help to get the cardinal noticed. In the media, I predict more welcome vanishings for that old harpy Polly Toynbee, whose Sixties witterings have surely had their day; for Taki, who has taken to invention in his rant in *The Spectator*; and of course Rosie Boycott. To everyone else, I send best wishes for a seriously swinging and scandalous new year.



● *RELATIONS between Americans and the Irish, normally so rosy, are strained at last. Sinead Cusack (above), the Cork actress who shares Jeremy Irons's bedchamber, believes she is being discriminated against by Broadway. Starlets such as Nicole Kidman gain plaudits for working in the West End but strict American union laws prevent Cusack's countryfolk from wowing the Big Apple. "This is not sour grapes, but our own actors should be given an equal opportunity," protests Sinead, suffering from tortuous foody metaphor syndrome: "It's all very well for those Americans being the cream in our coffee, but we don't want it all to turn to sour milk."*

JASPER GERARD

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Beware the euro yes-men



PRIDE OF NATIONS

Britain will stand stronger for staying out of EMU

Today is a proud and historic day for Europe and, even more so, for Britain. In continental countries, governments and political philosophers have been dreaming for centuries about the creation of a unified European State that would stretch from Brussels to Brindisi, from Berlin to Bilbao. Today's launch of European economic and monetary union (EMU) which will transfer the most important economic functions of the 11 participating governments from the national to the European level, is not only the culmination of more than a decade of political commitment and economic sacrifice for the major European nations. It is probably the biggest step ever taken towards the ideal of a full-scale European union — at least by democratic, as opposed to military, means.

If EMU appears a success, which in practice will be judged by whether the introduction of the euro coincides with a substantial reduction in unemployment, the momentum for further integration among participating countries will receive a major boost. Economic developments in Europe will, in truth, be largely a function of global events and of decisions on deregulation and economic restructuring which still have to be taken at the national level. But if the introduction of the single currency does happen to coincide with the end of a decade of economic stagnation in Europe, the advocates of further integration are bound to claim vindication.

But even if EMU proves less successful, the initial effect may be to increase pressures for further centralisation. If EMU offers no salvation for Europe's unemployed — if, instead, it unleashes new waves of international competition and job losses — then Europe's politicians will naturally seek to deflect blame from the inherent flaws in the EMU blueprint, as well as from their own failure to undertake the necessary domestic restructuring. The natural reflex of EMU's sponsors may well be to look for new ways of centralising economic decision-making at the pan-European level, beginning with Franco-German demands for tax harmonisation. Almost whatever happens economically in the next few years, therefore, European integrationists are likely to claim that EMU necessitates further steps towards full unification. In the long run, of course, it remains to be seen whether the disparate nations of Europe would submit quietly to the degree of centralisation and bureaucratic control implied by the EMU blueprint. But for the majority of continental politicians who are strongly committed to the long-term ideal of further integration, today's launch of the euro is a source of great pride.

The same should be true of Britain. Outside EMU Britain may rediscover its historic role as a great trading nation, deeply involved in Europe, but always independent and looking outwards to the rest of the world. Outside EMU, Britain will remain the world's fifth largest economy and a full member of the EU. Its pivotal position in the single market will be guaranteed not only by treaty but also by the fact that Britain will be easily euroland's largest trading partner. Like Sweden and Denmark, Britain should continue to prosper as an independent country. And although, as EMU pushes Europe towards further integration, new arguments may arise for and against Britain joining, there should be no more economic or financial pressure on Britain to give up its independence than there has been on Canada to join the US, or New Zealand to merge with Australia. Britain's relationship with Europe cannot and will not be decided by businessmen and financial markets. It will be settled by British voters, according to their own judgments, and in their own good time.

GREEN SPROUTS

Rachel Carson planted the seeds of environmentalism

The flourishing of the Sixties may have brought free love and flower power and psychedelic ideals; but even as the age of the earth mother bloomed, a ripple of alarm was ruffling the grass roots of society. Lackadaisical daydreams of living for the moment were pierced by the sharper realities of rapid industrial development. And, in the wake of the 1966 slag heap slip at Aberfan which buried a school, or the oil pollution caused by the stricken tanker *Torrey Canyon* in 1967, a youth movement was beginning to grow up and wonder what sort of legacy might be left to their offspring.

In 1962 Rachel Carson had published her fierce polemic *Silent Spring*. Marshalling empirical evidence of environmental damage done by chemical pesticides, she had exposed with steely authority the arrogance and folly of those who sought to conquer nature, disregarding the integrity of the natural world and the interdependence of all living things. The response of the Establishment was vicious. Carson's scientific credentials were impugned and her status as a childless, unmarried woman belittled. But as evidence of graver ecological damage kept coming in, public opinion remained stalwart. *Silent Spring* planted the seeds of an environmental movement which in the 1970s was to germinate and sprout into a mainstream political issue.

PEOPLE OF THE CENTURY

At first this Green movement spread by word of mouth among like-minded individuals, its ideals increasingly seeping out into broader society as the validity of its concerns became ever more apparent. In 1972 the classic research project *Limits to Growth* was published, setting the agenda for a survivalist stream of thought. Its conclusions were taken as evidence of a catastrophic fate awaiting man unless rising levels of production and consumption were curbed: Barbara Ward's *Only One Earth* called for a fundamental shift in human allegiances away from the family and the nation state to the planet itself.

In 1972 Barbara Ward also presented a report to the first UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm. Shortly afterwards the European Union decided to initiate the first environmental action programme. The Values Party, founded in New Zealand in 1972, was the first Green party in the world, and the forerunner of the British Green Party was established, as the People Party, a year later. Environmental concern became as fashionable as kipper ties and platform boots. The politics of catalytic converters, power station scrubbers and bottle banks held sway. And a pattern was set for an ensuing decade in which the environment, described by Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s as a "humdrum issue", came to be regarded, even by her, as "one of the great challenges" of the 20th century.

The focus of 1970s environmentalism was resource depletion. More recently this has been replaced by the idea that it is not so much scarcity of resources that causes the problem but the impact man makes on the planet by his use of them. But still, that decade when Green politics first put down their roots established a precedent. The West took a serious look beyond the moment, beyond the next set of economic figures, to a more distant future. And in this it anticipated a millennial mood.

ROMAN TYPES

The number's not yet up for ancient numerals

For architects, film producers, kings, Popes, Olympic officials and families in which males pass their names to their sons the millennium bug has struck a year early. They awake today unsure of the date. For, unlike most of us, this eclectic group still counts in the system in use two millennia ago, dating its documents with an array of capital letters. And now (as we report on page 1 column ii) there is a dilemma unforeseen by Caesar or those recording his epics in wide screen celluloid: does today begin the year MIM? Or MCMXCIX? Or even, long-windedly, MDCCCCLXXXXVIIII?

Roman numerals are majestic, elegant and confusing. Some three centuries before the Year of Our Lord (impossible to represent in a system that has no zero), digital notation first took hold: holding apart his fingers and thumb a legionnaire chiselled a V on the milestone. And if Publius owed Claudius 10 sesterces, a double V or X could be gouged on a wax IOU. Larger numbers were difficult. Borrowing the Greek phi to represent 1,000, the Ancients simply added brackets either side of the I, so that 100,000 was written as (((I))). The Columna Rostrata, erected to commemorate victory over the Carthaginians, repeated this symbol 23 times to give the figure of 2,300,000.

The rules are not cast in stone. Bored masons took short cuts, and the subtractive principle caught hold. By the Middle Ages four strokes had been replaced by IV — for everyone except horologists. To this day, the clock stands still at X to IIII.

The system does not add up. Mathematics had to wait for the Arabs. How the Romans crossed hill and dale in such straight lines remains a mystery, as the finest surveyors in the land could not build Britain's first motorway (the M1) without curves. But complexity has its advantages. No one can complain that the BBC is repeating old material, for by the time you have begun to work out MCMLXXXVIII the credits have rolled past. Lingering in front of a handsome town hall, you have time to admire its lines while you decipher its cornerstone. And if you are called James Baker III, you can always insist that the tax demand should have been addressed to your father or even your grandfather, instead.

Writing a month in Roman numerals could resolve the transatlantic confusion between 6 September and June 9. It would add joyful tension to the lottery if all balls were Roman. And it connects us to our forebears: for though present confusion may last a year, we shall all know what we will celebrate in the year MM.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Wish the euro well but keep UK out

From Sir John Craven and others

Sir, The advent of the euro is a time to wish the new currency well. No British interest will be served if our European partners have an unstable currency. Nevertheless, it remains right for Britain to stand aside from this politically driven venture. Our business cycle is different from that of Germany and France. And our investment and trading patterns are different: British industry and commerce do more business in dollars than in all the European currencies combined.

Within the single market, but outside euroland, the prospects for Britain are bright. We have the fifth largest economy in the world and one of the most competitive; our political and trading interests reach around the globe, and our information-based industries are ideally suited to the 21st century. We will be able to set our monetary policy to suit our own conditions — an advantage which outweighs the modest gains to be derived from a regional currency zone.

After the euphoria of the euro's launch, grand vision will give way to practical realities. Upward harmonisation of tax is still urged on us as a logical consequence of EMU. The City, for example, faces the threat of a withholding tax on savings, which would be immensely damaging for London's vast international capital-market operations. An inward-looking Europe, with an overgrown public sector, has not yet recovered its ability to create jobs. The euro is no panacea for these problems. It could well exacerbate them.

Having restored sterling's reputation for financial discipline, let us have the confidence to keep it. What is right for Britain will be good for Europe too.

Yours etc,
JOHN CRAVEN,
Chairman, Lonhro,
TIM CONGDON,
Managing Director,
Lombard Street Research,
WALTER ELTIS,
Emeritus Fellow, Exeter College, Oxford,
GERARD LYONS,
Chief Economist, Dai-Ichi Kangyo Bank (DKB) International,
TIM MELVILLE-ROSS,
Director-General, Institute of Directors,
BRIAN PRIME,
Executive Director,
Federation of Small Businesses,
SAINSBURY of PRESTON CANDOVER,
WOLFSON of SUNNINGDALE,
Chairman, Great Universal Stores,
Business for Sterling,
18 Buckingham Gate, SW1E 6PE.
December 31.

Multiple causes for decline in wild-bird numbers

From Mr Gavin Weightman

Sir, As an obituary of British wild birds Derwent May's article in today's Weekend section, "Where have all our birds gone?", is cautious and considered. However, in my view, it falls into the trap of overemphasising losses and underplaying gains.

For instance, there is ample shrubby habitat in Britain to support a much larger population of nightingales than arrives each summer and, since we are in the northern extremity of their range, their southward retreat may have nothing at all to do with the British environment. Our magpie population grew in the 1970s, spreading southwards from the Midlands. While the carrion crow is now very common in London, rooks disappeared from the capital in 1916 and the jackdaws left Hyde Park in the 1960s.

Skylarks, so rare now in many parts of the country, are abundant on the military firing ranges of Salisbury Plain and on the vast landfill rubbish dumps to the east of London. Song thrushes have been declining for a number of years, but mistle thrushes thrive. Great crested grebe, nearly extinct in Britain at the turn of the century, are now common, nesting on the lakes in London parks.

House martins, which returned to Central London after the Clean Air Act of 1956 had taken effect, have, inexplicably, recently disappeared from my area. In the countryside the planting of winter wheat seems to have favoured wood pigeons.

Perhaps such fluctuations are normal. It is certainly far too simple to blame them on the growth of industrialism. If the decline of sparrows in towns, for instance, is related to the disappearance of the once vast population of horses (as it may well be), is that an ecological disaster, or something we should calmly accept? Blackbirds were apparently much rarer in the 19th century than they are today: like robins and dunnocks (hedge sparrows), they are a woodland species that took to suburban gardens.

The natural world is wonderfully resilient and quick to exploit new opportunities. I wish the song thrushes would return to my back garden (they used to sing at night) but I really do not know what to blame for their disappearance. It is a sad and mysterious decline, but that is no reason to blame it on ourselves.

Yours faithfully,
GAVIN WEIGHTMAN,
15 Kelross Road, N5 2QS.
December 26.

From Mrs Elizabeth Sigmund

Sir, Congratulations on publishing Derwent May's article. I was amazed, however, to find in it no mention of the horrific effects of the use of pesticides and fungicides on wild birds.

Insecticides cause the death of thousands of our wild birds. Some of their effects are indirect: killing insects deprives birds of essential food. Others are direct: since the seeds of grain, vegetables, salad-crops and fruit are treated prior to planting, and then regularly sprayed with pesticides and fungicides, seed-eating birds are poisoned.

It is a terrible fact that our desire for "perfect" food can cause the destruction of these creatures, in the name of "scientific progress".

Yours sincerely,
ELIZABETH SIGMUND
(Co-ordinator, Organophosphate Information Network),
Heathfield Farmhouse,
Callington, Cornwall PL17 7HP.
December 28.

From Mr Alasdair Laing

Sir, Derwent May makes a strong case for a reappraisal of agricultural practices to allow our bird populations to thrive in the wild. However, until the consumer is prepared to pay the real market price of food produced less intensively — either through shop prices or taxation to support environmental subsidy — farmers will have little choice but to operate as efficiently as they can if they are to survive.

Yours faithfully,
ALASDAIR LAING,
Logie House,
Forres, Morayshire IV36 2QN.
December 28.

From Mr Rod Attrill

Sir, Here in western Wales there is little arable farming. The "endangered" skylark (letter, December 26) is a daily delight above our fields, while swallows still nest in our barn and linnets and meadow pippits abound. Red kites, ravens and peregrines are also common.

I do have one major concern, though. In the autumn, while the hedgerows are still laden with berries, they are drastically flailed — cut back so that all new growth, leaves and berries included, is removed. This both reduces cover for birds and deprives them of a valuable source of pre-winter feed.

I can understand the hedges being cut after the birds have finished breeding; but let's leave it until the new year, when they have also finished feeding.

Yours faithfully,
ROD ATTRILL,
Motygido Farmhouse,
Llanarth, Ceredigion SA47 0NU.
rod@attrill.freeserve.co.uk
December 26.

Penalties of an error of judgment

From Mr Alastair Albright

Sir, Since when was it a crime to aspire to better things or attempt to climb above one's station, or to lend money to a friend on preferential terms, or indeed without demanding interest at all?

Sadly, in today's Britain, no one can do such things honestly, decently and with genuine generosity without aspersions being cast, innuendos and slurs being made as to one's motives, and even accusations being levelled of corruption, critical misjudgment or dishonesty (letters, December 23, 24, 26, 29 and 30).

Tony Blair should stand by ministers who fall foul of an envious, mean-minded and uncharitable press, in the spirit of the society he wishes to foster and proclaim, namely a Christian and a classless one.

Yours sincerely,
ALASTAIR ALBRIGHT,
64 Paddenswick Road, W6 0UB.
December 28.

From Mr John D. Hart

Sir, I understand that prisoners serving a life sentence may not be eligible for parole unless they admit that they are guilty of the crime for which they have been imprisoned. Should not government ministers who resign or are sacked for having shown a lack of judgment, while protesting that they have "done nothing wrong", be banned from holding any public office until they accept they *have* done wrong?

Should not any MP who has been forced to return to the back benches in such circumstances be obliged to seek a vote of confidence from his or her constituents through a by-election?

Yours faithfully,
J. D. HART,
Hill House, Marlesford,
Wickham Market, Suffolk IP13 0AZ.
December 26.

From Mr Neil Workman

Sir, The loan of £373,000 from Geoffrey Robinson to Peter Mandelson is for some of us "pretty gut-wrenching stuff" [report, October 19, of Mr Mandelson's comments on General Pinochet's claiming diplomatic immunity].

Yours sincerely,
NEIL WORKMAN,
11 Park Crescent, Pontyclun,
Rhondda-Cynon-Taff CF72 9BR.
December 29.

From Mr Toby Jessel

Sir, "Honourable" (letters, December 30)? Remember Emerson:

The louder he talked of his honour,
The faster we counted our spoons
(*The Conduct of Life*, 1860).

Yours faithfully,
TOBY JESSEL,
The Old Court House,
Hampton Court, Surrey KT8 9BW.
December 30.

Aonach Mor avalanche

From Mr Peter Wood

Sir, Your report today on the Aonach Mor tragedy (later editions) indicates that, according to unnamed experts, a category three avalanche warning on a scale of one to five put out by the Scottish Avalanche Information Service was unlikely to deter "well-equipped" climbers from going out.

Mr Wilde's party was apparently fully and properly equipped and that had no bearing whatever on the fact that the slope they were on avalanched. If a category three warning will not deter or cause modification of plans, what will? Perhaps the inquiry will determine the issue in a meaningful form. (I write as someone who has survived an avalanche.)

Yours faithfully,
PETER WOOD,
Newbold Farm,
Duntisbourne Abbots, Cirencester,
Gloucestershire GL7 7JN.
December 31.

Desert Fox strategy

From Air Commodore Alastair Mackie

Sir, Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon (letter, December 23) interprets the Desert Fox strategy as engaging the enemy's war fighting capabilities at long range instead of "fighting eyeball to eyeball when you don't need to".

Surely it wasn't that we didn't need to but rather that we couldn't. In the absence of the huge forces needed for a land war, wasn't our strategy simply to see what air power on its own could do? And given an enemy with some very nasty weapons indeed and a known propensity to use them, were we not, and are we not still, facing the grave risks consequent on air power not having achieved very much?

Yours faithfully,
ALASTAIR MACKIE,
4 Warwick Drive, SW15 6LB.
December 24.

From Mr Ian Mavor

Sir, Your columns have carried extensive comment on the problem of identifying the real objectives behind the Iraq airstrikes by the US and Britain.

A clue may be provided by Michael Theodoulou's report of December 21, in which he quotes Said Aburish, the Palestinian who is writing a biography of Saddam Hussein, as saying:

Don't bomb them [Iraqis on the ground]. Pull back and say, "If he [Hussein] goes, you can export all the oil you want to rebuild the country."

Are the UK and US Governments afraid of the impact on the price of oil which could come about from such a policy statement?

Yours faithfully,
IAN MAVOR,
53 Bushwood Road,
Kew, Surrey TW9 3BG.
December 22.

Ramblers' wrongs

From Mr Mark Shore

Sir, I do not wish to take sides in the "right to roam" issue, but the photograph of ramblers on your back page today might in a small way throw light on some of the landowners' objections.

Three of the ramblers are shown standing on a farm gate; one rule of the countryside is, if you have to stand on or climb over a gate, always do so one at a time at the hinge end (basic physics, actually).

Yours faithfully,
MARK L. SHORE,
73 Wooburn Manor Park, Wooburn,
High Wycombe HP10 0ES.
December 28.

The ultimate irony

From Professor Kenneth Minogue

Sir, The concept of irony in your columns is getting out of hand.

One correspondent on December 19 thinks it ironic that we are sending goodwill Christmas cards to friends and dropping bombs on Iraq at the same time; another on the same day derives irony from our entry into the European Convention on Human Rights coinciding with the Pinochet decision being set aside because one judge is a public supporter of human rights.

The first example is no more ironic than the fact that we enjoy mushrooms and avoid toadstools; the second is simply untrue. The judgment of the law lord in question has been set aside for the quite different reason that he was judge in a case where he belonged to the same organisation as one of the plaintiffs — an evident issue of natural justice.

The concept of irony has already run amok in academia; is it now becoming the pomposity of choice in public discussion?

Yours faithfully,
KENNETH MINOGUE,
43 Perrymead Street, SW6 3SN.
December 19.

Yachting pioneers

From Major M. C. Lewin-Harris

Sir, I really must applaud you and Sir Robin Knox-Johnston for his article on the Sydney-Hobart race, "Tested to the limits" (December 29). Having taken part in the 1979 Fastnet race (and come to grief, albeit not terminally) I can fully support the need for challenge, which was never more important than it is today.

Now, as a cruising yachtsman, I can not only enjoy my pastime, but do so in comparative comfort and safety. This is thanks to the many developments which only happened because people like Glyn Charles, or Pete Goss, who rescued a fellow competitor in the Vendée Globe race in similar conditions (reports, December 27 and 28, 1996), or indeed Sir Robin himself, are willing to accept such challenges and, in doing so, develop the necessary equipment to meet them head-on.

Long may this spirit continue.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL LEWIN-HARRIS
(Vice-Commodore,
The Royal Cruising Club),
Conquest Farm, Norton Fitzwarren,
Taunton TA2 6PN.
musketeer@dial.pipex.com
December 30.

Addressing postcodes

From Mr Roger Macdonald Smith

Sir, Mr Ray Perkins (letter, December 28) is not alone in wondering why we are still expected to use full postal addresses despite the existence of postcodes.

Some seven years ago, curious to test the system, I posted a letter to myself from Kenilworth bearing only my initial and surname, and my postcode. It reached me here in Cornwall after about ten days. Various frankings on the envelope testified to a tortuous journey; among them was one which read: "Please use the postcode."

Four years ago I tried again. Posted this time in Nuthall, Nottinghamshire, with a second-class stamp, my letter reached me within 24 hours. There's hope yet.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER MACDONALD SMITH,
Mill House, Trehaddle,
Cusgarne, Truro TR4 8RN.
macsu99@macsmith1.freeserve.co.uk
December 29.

From Mr Keith Harrison

Sir, I endorse all that Ray Perkins says about postcodes. I have sent letters quoting only the postcode and on all occasions the addressee has told me that the Post Office has written the street address on the envelope before delivering the letter.

Yours etc,
KEITH HARRISON,
16 Dovedale Close, Cardiff CF2 5LS.
keith@keithharrison.freeserve.co.uk
December 29.

From Mr Reg Gale

Sir, Many of us have the habit of putting our own addresses on the backs of letters we send to families and friends abroad.

I always put simply: "GALE FORCE TEN CV35 0AQ UK", which is sufficient worldwide, I am sure.

I have the honour to be,
Sir, your obedient servant,
REG GALE,
Force Ten, Spinney Close,
Redlands Farm, Lighthorne,
Warwickshire CV35 0AQ.
December 28.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Off target

From Mr Tony Collins

Sir, One of the items Santa left in my stocking this year is a book, *The Archers* (Virgin Publishing Ltd). I see from the back cover it is classified as "general non-fiction".

Is there something we should be told?

Yours sincerely,
TONY COLLINS,
37 Chaucer Road, Hillside,
Rugby, Warwickshire CV22 5RP.
tonycollins@dawdler.demon.co.uk
December 27.

Up to speed

From Dr Paula Moore

Sir, As a regular traveller by Eurostar, my husband received a Christmas card from them. It arrived on December 29. It seemed most appropriate.

Yours sincerely,
PAULA MOORE,
1 Northfield, Braughing,
Ware, Hertfordshire SG11 2QQ.
December 30.

Social news

The Queen, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, will be present at the Maundy Service in Bristol Cathedral at 11.00 am on Thursday April 1. Her Majesty will distribute the Royal Maundy during the service.

New Year's Day birthdays

Dr Jack Birks, company chairman, 79; Lord Colwyn, 57; Mr John Fuller, writer, 62; Lord Kingsland, QC, 57; Baroness Lloyd of Highbury, 71; Sir Albert McQuarrie, former MP, 81; Mr James Moorhouse, MEP, 75; Colonel P.A. Porteous, VC, 81; Mrs Patience Purdy, former president, National Council of Women of Great Britain, 70; Mr J.D. Salinger, author, 80; Lord Swansea, 74.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Lorenzo de Medici (The Magnificent), Florence, 1449; Huldreich Zwingli, Swiss reformer, Wildhaus, 1484; Katherine Philips, poet, London, 1631; Paul Revere, American patriot, Boston, Massachusetts, 1735; Maria Edgeworth, novelist, Blackbourton, Oxfordshire, 1767; Arthur Hugh Clough, poet, Liverpool, 1819; Sir James Frazer, anthropologist, Glasgow, 1854; Henry Handel Richardson (pen-name of Ethel Florence Lindesay), novelist, Melbourne, 1870; E.M. Forster, novelist, London, 1879; William Fox, film producer, Hungary, 1879; Martin Niemoller, anti-Nazi priest, Lippstadt, Germany, 1892; J. Edgar Hoover, founder of the FBI, Washington, 1895; H.A.R. (Kim) Philby, British double agent, Ambala, India, 1911; Jack de Manio, broadcaster, 1914.

DEATHS: William Wycherley, dramatist, London, 1716; James Francis Edward Stuart, the "Old Pretender", Rome, 1766; Johann Christian Bach, composer, London, 1782; Heinrich Hertz, physicist, Bonn, 1894; Sir Edwin Lutyens, architect, London, 1944; Maurice Chevalier, actor and singer, Paris, 1972; John Aloysius Costello, Prime Minister of Ireland 1948-51 and 1954-57, 1976.

The Daily Universal Register (renamed *The Times* on January 1, 1788), was founded, 1785.

Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland came into force, 1801.

The Commonwealth of Australia was established with Edmund Barton as the first Prime Minister, 1901.

The British Broadcasting Corporation (formerly Company) broadcast its first programmes, 1927.

The farthing ceased to be legal tender, 1961.

Britain entered the Common Market, 1973.

Church news

Appointments

The Rev Michael Gudgeon, with permission to officiate (Chichester): to be Priest-in-Charge, Worthing St Andrew (same diocese).

The Rev Dr Michael Harrison, Priest-in-Charge, Eltham Holy Trinity (Southwark): appointed Vicar, same benefice.

The Rev Nicholas Helm, Vicar, Sheffield St Bartholomew (Sheffield): to be Bishop's Chaplain, and Adviser in Spirituality (same diocese).

The Rev David Heslop, Chaplain, Course Leader and Tutor in Pastoral Studies, University of Derby: to be Vicar, Castle Donington and Lockington cum Hemington (Leicester).

The Rev Richard Jackson, Curate, Lindfield (Chichester): to be Vicar, Rudgwick (same diocese).

University news

Ulster

The University of Ulster has announced more than £4.5 million in funding for research projects. They include:

Research Grants

Dr P C **Eames**, £159,456 from EPSRC (Improved solar cell performance in building integration).

Charities

Professor J A **Dunn**, £125,000 from Positive Ethos Trust (EMU promoting schools project).

Dr C **Hudson**, £49,431 from the British Diabetic Association (Factors influencing in diabetic maculopathy.

Professor D T **Sines**, £45,000 from the Ulster Cancer Foundation (Lectureship in cancer nursing).

Dr T **Robson**, £30,251 from the Cancer Research Campaign (Manipulation of P450 gene expression in tumours).

Research Contracts

Professor F C **Monds**, £920,000 from CEC - Peace & Reconciliation (Technology and Software Incubator Centre).

Professor J J **Strain**, £328,408 from MAFF (Functional markers of optimal nutritional status for copper).

Dr A **Cooper**, £300,731 from the DOE Environment Heritage Service, (Northern Ireland Countryside Survey 2000).

Professor H F **McMahon**, £292,000 from HEFEC/DENI (Infusing teacher education with the new technologies).

Dr A **Cooper**, £212,864 from CEC - LIFE (Biodiversity action on industrial sites).

Professor D **McKeag**, £200,904 from Department of Trade & Industry and £148,800 from Ford Motor Co (Teaching Company programme).

Professor M E C **Hull**, £195,919 from CEC - ESPRIT (Successful user-centred systems engineering development and environment).

Professor B **Norton**, £195,367 from MTP. (Manufacturing Technology Partnership).

Dr J **Carmichael**, £145,579 from the Department of Health, (Life and Health Technologies (Northern Ireland).

Professor S E **Cairns**, £125,700 from the John Templeton Foundation, (Forgiveness and the reduction of inter group conflict).

Dr E T **McAdams**, £128,678 from CEC - ESPRIT, (Micro-Card: Si-based multifunctional microsystem needle for myocardial ischemia monitoring).

Dr MDJ **O'Neill**, Mrs TM Scott, £101,704 from DTI and NuPrint Fabric Converters (Teaching Company programme).

Dr P **Lyle**, £85,152 from CEC - INTERREG (An integrated geographical approach to the preliminary assessment of potential waste disposal sites).

Professor K E **O'Neill**, £79,600 from Department of Trade & Industry and Graham & Heslip, (Teaching Company programme).

Dr T M **McGinnity**, £77,904 from Department of Trade & Industry, FORBAIRT, the International Test Technologies, (Teaching Company programme).

Professor R **McIlhagger**, £76,904 from the Department of Trade & Industry and from William Ross & Co (Teaching Company programme).

Dr R J **Millar**, £76,900 from DTI and I Pennick & C Pennick (Teaching Company programme).

Professor D **McKeag**, £76,900 from the Department of Trade & Industry and Uni-Drill (Teaching Company programme).

Ms C M **Shapcott**, £56,689 from CEC - Telematics (Distance education in rural areas via libraries).

Dr B J **Murtagh**, £52,100 from CCRU (Integration or division: Community dynamics and social capital in a mixed area).

Professor I **Rowland**, £49,866 from MAFF (Influence of human gut microflora on dietary soya isoflavone phytoestrogen bioavailability in adults and children).

Professor J J **Strain**, £46,000 from Waltham Centre for Pet Care. (Feline antioxidant and immunological study).

Dr G P **Parr**, £45,000 from Fujitsu Telecommunications Europe (Intelligent mobile agents for distributed network management).

Mr W G **O'Neill**, £43,000 from the North Eastern Education & Library Board (Reading Recovery Centre).

Professor H P **McKenna**, £34,783 from Rotunda Hospital Dublin, (Midwifery skills mix project).

Dr G P **Parr**, £34,780 from CEC - Telematics (Telematics for communication and health).

Professor J J **Strain**, £30,500 from Starkist Seafood (USA). (Donation for generic research in nutrition).

Ms G M **Robinson**, £27,200 from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey).

Professor I **Rowland**, £25,400 from ORAFTI (protelve effects of prebiotics against colon cancer).

Professor G D **Baxter**, £24,574 from Meditech International Inc (Toronto). (Laser therapy in the management of musculoskeletal disorders).

Professor D T **Sines**, £20,000 from Mona Grey. (Mona Grey nursing research studentship).

The night sky in January

BY MICHAEL J. HENDRIE
ASTRONOMY CORRESPONDENT

MERCURY is in the morning sky but too near the Sun for observation this month.

Venus is a brilliant evening object of -3.9 magnitude, setting in the southwest 2 hours after the Sun by the 31st. The waxing crescent Moon will be near by on the 18th and 19th.

Mars is in Virgo rising about midnight by the 31st. During the month it brightens from 1.0 to 0.6 magnitude as it approaches opposition in April, when it will be at its brightest and closest to the Earth. Mars will be 4 degrees north of the bright star Spica about the 8th and the Moon will be close by on the 9th.

Jupiter passes from Aquarius into Pisces during January, still a very bright -2.2 magnitude. It sets in the west about 21h by the 31st. Moon just to the south on the 21st.

Saturn is 0.6 magnitude and in Pisces. By the end of the month it will be setting about midnight. Moon nearby on the 23rd-24th.

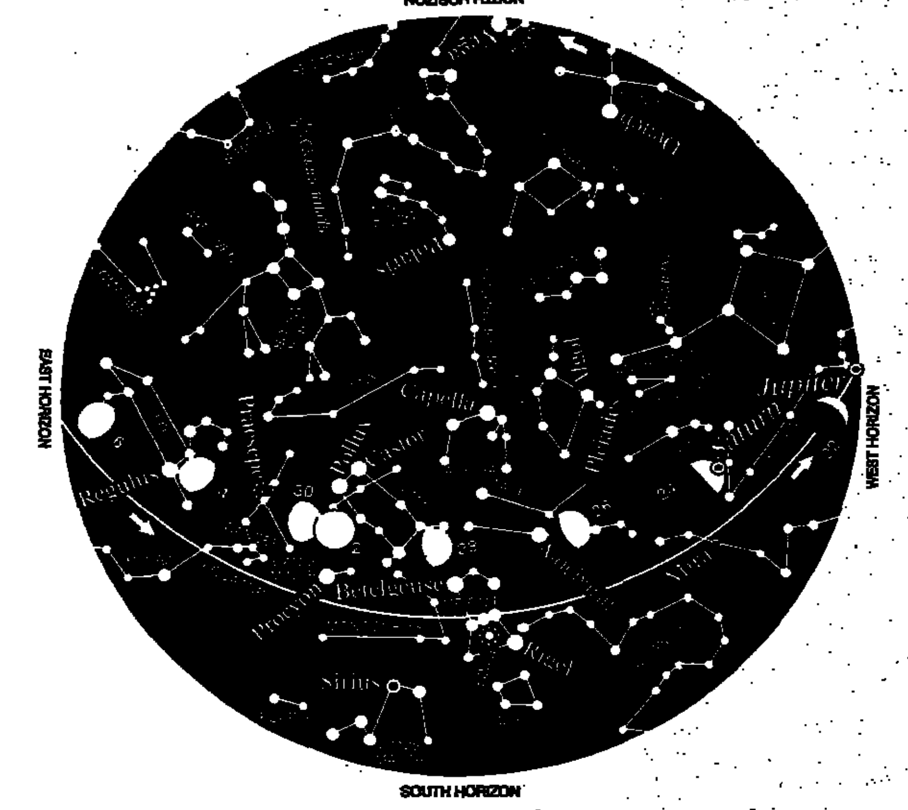
Uranus and Neptune are in Capricornus throughout 1999. Both are too close to the Sun for observation this month, Neptune being in conjunction with the Sun on the 22nd and Uranus on 2nd February.

The Moon: full Moon 2d 03h, last quarter 9d 14h, new Moon 17d 16h, first quarter 24d 19h and full Moon 31d 16h. There will be two full moons in January and two in March but none in February this year. There will be a penumbral eclipse of the Moon on the 31st but the Moon will be only slightly darkened and will not rise in the British Isles until after mid-eclipse, so the event is likely to pass unnoticed. The Moon will be near the bright star Regulus in Leo on the 4th-5th and near Aldebaran in Taurus on the 26th-27th.

The Earth will be at perihelion, its closest to the Sun, on 3d 13h (147 million km).

Algol, the eclipsing binary star in Perseus, fades from 2.1 to 3.4 magnitude every 69 hours. It can be seen when faint this month about 14d 03h, 17d 01h and 19d 21h.

Sunset on the 1st is at 16h 00m and on the 31st at 16h 45m while sunrise is at 08h 08m and 07h 40m on the same dates. Astronomical twilight ends at 18h 05m and 18h 45m early and late in the month and begins again at 06h 05m and 05h 45m.



The diagram shows the brighter stars that will be above the horizon in the latitude of London at 23h (11 pm) at the beginning, 22h (10 pm) in the middle, and 21h (9 pm) at the end of the month, local mean time. At places away from the Greenwich meridian the Greenwich times at which the diagram applies are later than the above by one hour for each 15 deg west of Greenwich and earlier by a like amount if the place be east. The map should be turned so that the horizon the observer is facing (shown by the words around the circle) is at the bottom, the zenith being at the centre. Greenwich Mean Time, known to astronomers as Universal Time and expressed in 24-hour notation, is used in the accompanying notes unless otherwise stated.

January is often the best month to see the winter constellations. At the time of the chart the most easily recognised of all the constellation figures stands astride the merdian. Orion the hunter is due south, the right way up and at his highest in the sky. Betelgeuse at his left shoulder is a giant red star, slightly variable in brightness, but unlike Algol, in an irregular and unpredictable way. The brightness is 0.5. magnitude. Rigel by Orion's right foot is bluer, is 0.1 magnitude and of higher surface temperature. It is farther away from us, 910 light years compared with 310 light years for Betelgeuse.

Below Orion's belt of three bright stars lies M42, the Great Nebula in Orion. This is visible to the naked eye but even low powered binoculars show a splendid glowing cloud of gas and dust with several stars imbedded within it. In even a small telescope the Orion nebula is a beautiful sight, greenish in colour and showing much whispy structure. It is part of a large area of dust and gas that spreads over most of the constellation of Orion, M42 being just the brightest part.

A line sloping down from Orion's belt towards the left (east) leads the eye to the blue star Sirius the brightest star in the sky in Canis Major (Greater Dog). As it is never very high in our sky it often scintillates wildly, flashing red, blue and apple green. Sirius, also known as 'the dog star' is -1.5 magnitude and is only 9 light years away. About half way between Betelgeuse and the Pleiades lies another red star, Aldebaran, in Taurus. This 0.9 magnitude star is 68 light years distant.

About an equal distance to the east of Betelgeuse is 0.4 magnitude Procyon, principal star of Canis Minor (Lesser Dog) in this inconspicuous constellation. Further still to the east is the bright star Regulus (1.3 mag.), brightest star of Leo Major (Greater Lion). Above Procyon lies Gemini (Heavenly Twins) Castor (1.6 mag.) and Pollux (1.1 mag.) forming their heads. The figure of Gemini, roughly a long rectangle, is tilted to the equator. The Twins rise in the northeast lying parallel with the horizon, but set in the northwest almost upright, feet first with Castor and Pollux disappearing last.

This change in orientation of the constellations as they cross the night sky is one of the factors making identification difficult. Another is the apparent change in size: the figures look larger near the horizon than when higher in the sky. This also applies to the Sun and Moon.

Much has been written about the Moon Illusion and many causes proposed, most of us perceive objects to be larger when near the horizon though they are no larger: if anything, distance and refraction combine to make them slightly smaller than when they are at their highest point.

The Times Night Sky 1999 contains monthly star charts and notes. The total eclipse of the Sun in August and major meteor showers are covered. Published by Times Books (price £4.99) it is available in good bookshops or by ringing the HarperCollins Credit Card Hotline on 0870 900 2050 (p&p free within UK)

Greek bronzes cast in a new light

Norman Hammond reports on a mystery surrounding the origins of two nude Classical statues

TWO Ancient Greek bronze statues found off the coast of Italy were probably made in the southern Peloponnese, analysis of their clay has shown. Specific details of the cores' composition also suggests that one statue was remodelled centuries after its original casting.

The discovery of the two lifesized nude statues, probably of warriors or athletes, in 1972 caused a sensation: Classical bronzes of such a scale rarely survive. They were found by fishermen near the hamlet of Riace, in Calabria, and a tug-of-war immediately began between regional and national authorities over where they should be displayed: the Italian Government wanted them in Rome, the Calabrians in their capital of Reggio, near the toe of Italy, where they would be a source of local pride and tourist income.

The Calabrians won, but the figures were sent to Florence for conservation and study. It was determined that both dated to the 5th century BC, but, as Gianni Lombardi and Massimo Vidale report in the *Journal of Archaeological Science*, it was difficult to determine the circumstances or the date of their loss.

It was generally assumed that they had been lost during a shipwreck, but since no remains were found, no date could be assigned. The Florentine restorers discovered that much of the original casting cores remained inside the statues, however, and recently new techniques of micro-excavation using remotely controlled cameras and digital imaging were applied to remove samples safely over a two-year period.

The cores of the legs and torso were found to have been made of separate slabs of clay mixed with animal hair and formed around iron bars, one of the standard techniques for large Classical bronzes. Complex joins between the legs and torso also suggested that the cores were assembled and disassembled more than once before the wax coating used in lost-wax casting was applied.

Almost 300 core samples were taken from the older statue, dating to 470-460BC, and almost 700 from the younger, of 440-430BC. A battery of techniques, including neutron-activation, plasma emission spectrometry, and palaeontological analyses were used to determine the chemical composition and mineral and fossil content of the clays. The clay cores themselves were most closely matched in Euboea, Attica and the northeastern Peloponnese, all in southern Greece: of these, the plain of Argos near modern Nauplion is the best candidate, Dr Lombardi and Dr Vidale say.

While most of each core was homogeneous, anomalies were found around the armpits. In the younger statue, the anomaly embraced the use of gypsum, a novel material, which, combined with a high lead content in the arms, suggested their replacement in the later Hellenistic-Roman period: the whole right arm and the left forearm were renewed, in a slightly different pose from the originals.

This in turn showed that the loss of the statues could not have occurred until several centuries after they were cast, perhaps during the Roman sack of conquered Greece, when many works of art were taken to adorn Rome and glorify its Emperors.

Source: *Journal of Archaeological Science* 25: 1055-1066.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr D.St.J. Bailey and Miss A.E. Mitchell
The engagement is announced between David St John, son of Mr and Mrs Harry Bailey, of Cheam, Surrey, and Alison Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Norman Mitchell, of Westerham, Kent.

Mr L.R. Christopher and Miss T. Goreham
The engagement is announced between Lance, son of Mr and Mrs A.K. Christopher, of Poole, Dorset, and Mrs A.M. Christopher, of Poole, and Tina, daughter of Mr and Mrs A.C. Goreham, of Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

Mr E.T. Colfox and Dr L.S.M. Slocock
The engagement is announced between Eddie, younger son of Sir John and Lady Colfox, of Dorset, and Lucy, daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Slocock, of Southover House, Tolpuddle, Dorset.

Mr R.A. Dickson and Miss L.I. Holmes
The engagement is announced between Richard Alexander, son of Mr and Mrs Ian Dickson, of Mussidan, France, and Louise Ingrid, daughter of Mr and Mrs Bernard Holmes, of Chipstead, Surrey.

Dr P.J. French and Miss V.J. Draper
The engagement is announced between Philip, only son of Mr and Mrs Terence French, of St Albans, Hertfordshire, and Vanessa, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Edward Draper, of Old Skelmersdale, Lancashire.

Mr V. Golding and Miss V. Heller
The engagement is announced between Vincent, elder son of Mr and Mrs E. Golding, of Canterbury, and Vivienne, elder daughter of Mr G. Heller, of Winchester, and Mrs S. Heller, of Southampton.

Mr N.E.L. Graves and Miss N.I. Gordon-Duff
The engagement is announced between Nicholas, only son of Mr and Mrs Brian Graves, of Tillington, West Sussex, and Nicola Ianthe, only daughter of Lieutenant Colonel and Mrs Roderick Gordon-Duff, of Rushall, Wiltshire.

Mr P.R. Jarvis and Miss T.E. Moxham
The engagement is announced, from Australia, between Philip Rolf, younger son of Mr and Mrs John Jarvis, of Witchampton, Dorset, and Tara Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Captain and Mrs Paul Moxham, of Armidale, New South Wales.

Mr B.B.E. Lane and Miss S. Bird
The engagement is announced between Ben, younger son of Mr and Mrs T.F.E. Lane, of Aston Clinton, Buckinghamshire, and Samantha, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs T.C. Bird, of Albion Street, London W2.

Dr P.A. Miller and Dr C.C.M. Hughes
The engagement is announced between Paul Anthony, son of Mr K. Miller, of Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire, and Mrs A. Miller, of Eton Wick, Windsor, and Catherine Coila Mary, daughter of Mr and Mrs W.H. Hughes, of Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire.

Mr R.G. Morris and Miss H.J.J. Hunting
The engagement is announced between Gwyn, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Cyril Morris, of Cardigan, Dyfed, and Helena, youngest daughter of Mrs Isobel Hunting and the late Mr Richard Haigh Hunting, of West Byfleet, Surrey.

Mr R.I. Schlich and Miss S.A. Simpson
The engagement is announced between Ian, son of Mr and Mrs Robin Schlich, of Uppingham, and Sophie, daughter of Mr David A.G. Simpson and Mrs Janey Simpson, of Hastings, Sussex.

Mr D.M. Swinnerton and Miss M.C. Nicholas
The engagement is announced between David, son of Mr and Mrs Michael Swinnerton, of Aldridge, Staffordshire, and Melissa, daughter of Mr Jonathan Grant-Nicholas, of Brassington, Derbyshire, and Mrs Justine Nicholas, of Lichfield.

Mr P.D. Thomson and Miss R.E. Baxter
The engagement is announced between Peter, son of Mr and Mrs Ian Thomson, of Chelsea, and Rachel, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Robert Baxter, of Windlesham, Surrey.

Dr R.S. Thomson and Dr A.J. Marriott
The engagement is announced between Richard, younger son of Mr and Mrs Stuart Thomson, of East Horsley, Surrey, and Alison, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Richard Marriott, of Lasborough, Gloucestershire.

Mr M.J. Tomlinson and Miss F.V. Mynors
The engagement is announced between Michael, elder son of Dr Howard and Dr Heather Tomlinson, of Harley Court, Hereford, and Frances, second daughter of Sir Richard and Lady Mynors, of Treago, St Weonards, Herefordshire.

Mr S.J. Ward and Miss J.M. Perry
The engagement is announced between Stuart, younger son of Mr and Mrs R.J. Ward, of Kingcoed, Monmouthshire, and Jill, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs W.A. Perry, of Tilshead, Wiltshire.

Mr I. Weir and Miss S. Varley
The engagement is announced between Iain, son of Mr and Mrs Alan Weir, of St Andrews, and Sarah, eldest daughter of Mr Christopher Varley and Ms Anne Eddell.

Latest wills

Sir Horace **Heyman**, Chairman English Industrial Estates Corporation 1970-77, member, Supervisory Board Zurich 1955-84, Director UK Group 1965-86, of Whitburn, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, left estate valued at £215,541 net.

He left £6,000 to the Tyne and Wear Foundation, Ellison Place, Newcastle upon Tyne, to set up two scholarships in the name of his wife Lady Dorothy Heyman and The Hanne Henrikson; £3,000 to Breathe North northern branch of the British Lung Foundation, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Viscount Greenwood, of Brightwell cum Sotwell, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, left estate valued at £29,209 net.

He left £5,000 to Grays Inn to found a scholarship in memory of his late father.

Lady Beryl Caroline Rees **Mayhew**, of Colney, Norwich, left estate valued at £1,064,959 net.

She left £2,000 to Royal Norfolk and Suffolk Yacht Club; £1,000 each to Royal Yachting Association, Beccles Sailing Club, Waveney and Oulton Broad Yacht Club and Norfolk Broads Yacht Club; plus shares in her estate to 24 charitable organisations.

Lady Amy Mary **Brabin**, of Hampstead, London NW3, left estate valued at £901,389 net.

Lady Jean Elizabeth **Lockhart-Mummery**, of Winchester, Hampshire, left estate valued at £428,159 net.

George Albert **Grange**, of Baildon, West Yorkshire, left estate valued at £8,691,348 net.

Peregrine Philip Dorney **Palmer**, of Dorney, Windsor, Berkshire, left estate valued at £7,373,065 net.

Margaret Elizabeth **Crook** of Thatcham, Berkshire, left estate valued at £6,360,395 net.

Kenneth Maurice **Williams**, of Clarendon, Salisbury, Wiltshire, left estate valued at £6,743,102 net.

He left £1,000 to both Salisbury Cathedral and St Martin's church, Salisbury; plus the remainder of his estate between Royal Masonic Hospital, Princess Louise Scottish Hospital, St John's Ambulance Brigade, Salisbury, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Battersea Dogs' Home, PDSA, and the RNLI.

Ernest William **Lancaster-Platt**, of Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, left estate valued at £2,298,288 net.

He left £1,000 each to RAF Benevolent Fund, Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, Salvation Army, Blesma, Midland Society for the Blind, Terence Higgins Trust, MS Society, and Parkinsons Disease Society; and £500 to Ambassador College, Boreham Wood.

Eva Renée **Cathcart**, of Aiskew, Bedale, North Yorkshire, left estate valued at £1,103,609 net.

She left £2,000 each to the Samaritans, Riding for the Disabled, SSAFA, Camphill Trust at Botton Village and Yorkshire Cancer Research Campaign.

Michael Alexander Hunter **Christie**, of Ludgershall, Buckinghamshire, left estate valued at £1,376,910 net.

John Duncan Sturge **Cole**, of Chalton, Waterlooville, Hampshire, left estate valued at £1,325,231 net.

He left £500 to both Pinewood Dog Sanctuary, Ascot, and the Wild Bird Sanctuary, Cornwall.

Frank **Hill**, of Winton, Bournemouth, Dorset, left estate valued at £1,575,174 net.

Winifred Agnes **Holt**, of Winchmore Hill, London, N21, left estate valued at £1,557,784 net.



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Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures for ever. Psalm 118.1 (NIV)

BIRTHS

ACHESON - On December 29th 1998, to Diana (née Francis) and Andrew, a daughter, Tara Annabelle Rosalind, a sister for Arthur.

BLAKISTON HOUSTON - On 21st December to Lucinda and Dick, a son, Michael Peter.

COSTAIN - On 24th December at Greenways, Chippenham to Amanda (née Norman-Thorpe) and Ian, a son, Samuel Harry Edward.

DAVEY - On 21st December 1998, to Kevin and Rachel (née Robb) a precious son, Harry Leathley Edward, a wonderful brother for George.

EFTHYMIOU - On 21st December at St. Thomas' Hospital to Calliope (née Palios) and Theodore, a beautiful daughter, Alexandra, a sister for Marie-Eleni and Anna.

FARQUHARSON - On 29th December 1998 in Milan, to Fiona (née Benton Jones) and Rupert, a son Alexander James.

HAYNES - On 19th December 1998 to Graziella and Philip, a beautiful son, Gabriele Philip Alfred.

VULLIAMY - December 15th to Laurence - TV Producer and Madeleine Mitchell - violinist, a daughter, Zerlina Evelyn Anna.

WHITBY - At Darlington to Alistair and Sarah (née Johnson) on 29th December 1998, a daughter, Amber Marina Alisha.

WHITE - On 27th December 1998, at Wycombe General Hospital to Joanna (née Shard) and Jonathan, a son, Cameron James, a brother for Alexandra and Francesca.

To place death notices, acknowledgements or notices please call 0171 680 6880

DEATHS

ARGO - Alan Brammer, peacefully at the Royal Brompton Hospital on December 28th. Much loved husband of Mary, and father of Simon, Anne, John and Cindy. Will be sadly missed by all his family and friends. Requiem Mass at the Church of the Holy Redeemer, Cheyne Row, Chelsea, SW3 on Friday, January 8th 1999 at 2pm followed by private burial. Any inquiries or Floral tributes to Chelsea F/D 0171 352 0008. Donations if desired, to the Royal Brompton National Heart Hospital.

CORNISH - Nancy (née Clare) of Barham Kent. Peacefully on December 30th 1998. Beloved wife of Kenneth and much loved mother of Richard Cornish and Wendy Markel. Sadly missed by granddaughter Christina, daughter-in-law Christina, and son-in-law Bennett. Funeral Service at St. John the Baptist, Barham at 2.00pm, Tuesday 5th January 1999. Family flowers only, but donations if desired to Alzheimers Research Trust, G.J. Livanos House, Granham's Road, Cambridge, CB2 5LQ.

GOODCHILD - Ronald Cedric Oxbourne (formerly Bishop of Kensington), aged 88. On December 28th, 1998, died, full of grace, at home with his beloved wife, Jean, and his five children. Funeral 2.00pm, Saturday 2nd January 1999, St. Nectan's Church, Welcombe, near Bideford, North Devon. Flowers (not wreaths please) c/o JL Fulford, Springfield, Hartland, Devon, EX39 6BG.

HAYWARD - On December 25th, Pauline, daughter of the late Keith and Doris Hayward, of a stroke. Funeral at Hanworth Crematorium, Hounslow Road, Hanworth, Feltham, Middlesex on Friday, 8th January at 10.30 am. Family flowers only to Holmes and Daughters, 3 Church Road, Ashford.

HOBBS - Dr. Mary Hobbs, FSA recently Cathedral Librarian, died peacefully on 29th December 1998. Funeral in Chichester Cathedral at 12.00 noon, 8th January 1999. By request no flowers, but donations to St. Wilfrid's Hospice, Grosvenor Road, Chichester PO19 2FP.

JOHNSON - Derek Cuffe. Passed away peacefully at home Christmas morning December 25th 1998 aged 88. Devoted husband of the late Marjore Pattison Johnson and much loved father of Trevor and Nigel, and their families. Funeral Service and cremation will take place in the New Year. Enquiries to J H Kenyon Funeral Directors. Tel: 0181 445 1651.

KING - On the 22nd December 1998 whilst at home, after an illness bravely borne, Roger, aged 76 years. Much loved husband of Jo and father of Louise, stepfather of Janette, and the late Teresa. Funeral Service will be held at St. Michael's and All Angels Church, Shalbourne on Tuesday 5th January 1999 at 11.30 am., followed by burial in the churchyard. Family flowers only please, but donations for Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre Appeal may be sent to Thomas Free & Sons Ltd, The Parade, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 1NE. Tel: 01672 512110.

RILEY - Ronald Bertram (Ron). Peacefully at home on December 29th. Much loved husband of Mary and father of Rosemary. Funeral at St. Edmund's Church, Southwold, Tuesday January 12th at 11.00am. No flowers please, donations if wished to Cancer Research.

ROBERTS - Suddenly, on Christmas Day, Michael, much loved son of Betty, brother of Timothy, uncle, great-uncle and friend. Funeral 2.30pm on Thursday 7th January 1999, at St. Mary's Worplesdon. Family flowers only, donations if desired to British Diabetic Association, 10 Queen Anne's Gate, London W1M 0BD.

ROSEVEARE - Scott Jeremy Spice, dearly beloved son of Jay and Zani, much loved brother to Blake and Tamsin, died in a tragic accident in the early hours of Christmas morning. Private funeral. Service of Thanksgiving to be held at 3 o'clock on Saturday 6th February at St. Mary's, Bentworth, Hampshire. All enquiries to John Steele and Son, Winchester 01962 844044.

SMITH-MASTERS - On the 18th December 1998 at Highfields Residential Home, Marlborough, Anthony aged 82 years. Formerly of Marlborough College. Funeral service will be held at St George's Church, Preshute on Thursday 7th January 1999 at 2pm. All enquiries may be addressed to Thomas Free & Sons Ltd. The Parade, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 1NE Tel: 01672 512110.

WATTS - Sybil Muriel Haynes. Dearly loved mother of Louise and Nicholas died peacefully at Mayday Hospital, Croydon, on December 29th. Family flowers only please but donations if desired to National Osteoporosis Society, c/o A. Smith Funeral Directors, 304 Wrythe Lane, Carshalton Surrey, SM5 1AF. Tel: 0181 644 9607.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

HAPPY LEO. Happy New Year ILYTMD and PR. Thank-you for 5 wonderful months. DOOTH.

WSBS. Wonder what 1999 holds for two x 1177 Happy New Year CSM. C77

LEGAL NOTICES

BRAXTON - Gladys Violet Braxton. Late of 2 Coldharbour Cottages, Inkpen Road, Hungerford Berkshire who died on 6.12.1998. All claims or interests to CHARLES LUCAS & MARSHALL, SOLICITORS, 28 HIGH STREET, HUNGERFORD, BERKS RG17 0NF on or before 19.3.1999

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OBITUARIES

MICHAEL SHERARD

Michael Sherard, couturier, died on December 26 aged 88. He was born on July 17, 1910.

Michael Sherard was one of London fashion's leading lights in the immediate postwar period, when it seemed possible that Britain's couturiers might wrest the lead from Paris. That dream was dashed by the wave of enthusiasm for Dior's New Look, but Michael Sherard held the creative ground more convincingly than any other London couturier during the 1950s, until he was swept aside by Mary Quant and the new, home-grown young designers of the next decade.

Michael Sherard was born in Kingston upon Thames into a family which had produced many prominent figures in the town's public life; his grandfather was a former Mayor and his father a leading local lawyer. The second of six boys, Sherard was christened Malcolm, but at the outset of his career, in the late 1940s, he decided that Michael would roll more smoothly off the tongues of Mayfair's fashionable set.

Educated at Berkhamsted and the Westminster School of Art, Sherard gained his early fashion experience as an apprentice with Peter Russell, who was a rarity even in 1930s London, a huntin', shootin', and fishin' dress designer. Sherard always recalled him as a tough businessman as well as a shrewd operator with customers. Sherard was his personal assistant from 1931 to 1940, when he went to work in the censorship department of the Admiralty.

In 1945, with financial assistance from his family, he opened his couture establishment in Connaught Street, later moving to Curzon Street, the epicentre of London's fashionable life in the 1950s.



In the 1950s Sherard was one of London's best hopes of displacing Paris for fashion

Though he started on a shoestring, Sherard became fashionable very quickly with an upper-class clientele which in those days went to a couturier for good coats, well-cut suits and fabulous ballgowns. He provided all three, though his heart was in ballgowns most of all. During the life of his fashion house, he produced 35 couture collections, one of which he sold in its entirety to the American fashion store Marshall Field, which remained a loyal customer for many years.

Although he designed wholesale collections, to be produced anonymously and without his label, he was never happy working this way, because as a romantic and a perfectionist, he found it too impersonal, and he preferred to have hands-on control over the final product.

He loved designing for film and the theatre, and many of the stars he dressed for public and private occasions, such as Phyllis Calvert, were to remain friends for the rest of his life. He was involved in more than thirty West End productions and created the wardrobe for the leading lady in *The Mousetrap* twice in its long run. As a ballet lover, he was thrilled to be chosen to provide the personal wardrobe for Margot Fonteyn shortly after the war when the Royal Ballet went on a promotional tour of North America. Several couturiers had been asked by the Government to design wardrobes for the ballerinas as a boost to the British fashion industry, but it was a feather in Sherard's cap to dress Fonteyn herself.

In 1948 Sherard became a member of the Incorporated Society of London Fashion Designers, signalling official acceptance of his stature in London fashion. Encouraged by the Government and chaired by Lady Pamela Berry, the society included the top designers of the time and did much to reassert London's position as a fashion centre after the war, especially with American buyers.

Sherard's working methods were traditional. Murray Arbeid, the dressmaker to Diana Princess of Wales, who trained with him (as did Caroline Charles), recalls that Sherard's drawings were almost like stick figures. They were essentially practical working tools, which showed precisely how a dress was to be made, though Sherard was always happiest when draping directly on the model.

He was at his best in the traditional couture crisis when, in the last 24 hours before a presentation, a couple of extra dresses have to be designed and made, with nobody sleeping the night before and an exhausted workroom getting them out on time for the show.

Sherard's largely socialite clientele loved his puckish wit, but they frequently burdened him with requests for daughters and nieces to become fashion models. His way of putting them off without offending them was worthy of Noel Coward. His house model, Patricia, was exceedingly tall. He made her a magnificent deep red velour coat trimmed with Persian lamb and almost sweeping the floor. It was an important piece of clothing, and great skill was needed to carry it off. When "debby" girls were brought in, he used to ask them to try on this coat. The resulting picture of the girl entirely swamped and looking ridiculous was enough to put off the most persistent mother without offending her *amour propre*.

Overwhelmed by financial problems, Sherard closed his establishment in 1965, but continued his involvement with fashion as a lecturer and consultant. He advised fashion students in Miami and was principal lecturer at the London College of Fashion from 1966 to 1975. In his retirement his great interest was his involvement with the Girdlers' Livery Company in the City, which he had joined when he was 18, becoming Master for 1959-60. In 1961 he masterminded the decoration of the company's new headquarters, which was described at the time as "little Versailles in the City".

Michael Sherard was never really given the recognition that his ability deserved. With his talent, he should have been a major and continuing figure in London fashion, but his gifts were overshadowed by the more strident self-publicity of other members of the Incorporated Society. He was forced out of business by rising costs, not lack of skill, as the examples of his clothes in various costume collections amply testify. If some of his grander colleagues were rather sniffy about him at times, they certainly could never fault his talent.

He never married.

SIR HAROLD KENT

Sir Harold Kent, GCB, QC, former Procurator-General and Treasury Solicitor, died on December 4 aged 95. He was born on November 11, 1903.

HAROLD KENT'S last big assignment as Procurator-General and Treasury Solicitor, was to instruct the Attorney General and prepare the papers for the 1963 Vassall Tribunal. Chaired by Lord Radcliffe, the tribunal followed the jailing for 18 years of the Admiralty clerk John Vassall, a homosexual who had been blackmailed into spying for the KGB.

Kent himself interviewed Vassall at some length and stayed with the inquiry until the bitter end, which included the imprisonment of two journalists who had refused to disclose their sources. Having been appointed KCB in 1954, he was advanced to GCB in 1963 in recognition of the enormous workload the Vassall case had imposed on him.

He later retained some links with security issues, serving on the Security Commission between 1965 and 1971 and on the 1971-72 committee set up to re-examine Section Two of the Official Secrets Act. Before starting his ten years as Treasury Solicitor in 1953, Kent had established his reputation as a parliamentary counsel.

As such, he was involved not only in framing much of the emergency legislation during the war, but in the heady sequence of nationalisation measures introduced by the Attlee Government after 1945, including the Act which established the National Health Service. Yet at one time it looked as if he might make his name not so much as a lawyer but as a thriller writer.

Harold Simcox Kent had been born at Tientsin, China, where his father was working as a barrister, specialising in Anglo-Chinese commerce. At the age of eight Harold was sent home to prep school in Malvern, travelling on the Trans-Siberian Railway with his brother, who was only a year older.

He won a scholarship to Rugby, and another to Merton College, Oxford, where he took a disappointing second in Greats. He was then called to the Bar in 1928.

Kent started writing whodunnits to supplement his meagre earning as a young barrister with a new wife to support. He finished his first, *The Black Castle*, while on honeymoon on the Norfolk Broads. A national newspaper celebrated the first publications of two "interesting new writers" in one week, one being Kent and the other Leslie Charteris, creator of The Saint. But the paths of the two newcomers soon diverged. Although Kent followed up his early success with *The Tenant of Smuggler's Rock*, the costs of fatherhood and house purchase prompted him to seek refuge in more regular employment as a junior parliamentary counsel.



Kent in the 1930s: in his early years he wrote whodunnits

From Whitehall he joined the Royal Artillery at the start of the Second World War but a duodenal ulcer, from which he had suffered for some years, took a strong dislike to army food. He was invalided out within weeks.

After the Vassall Tribunal, he took the option of retiring at 60 to become the Church of England's first Standing Counsel, first to the Church Assembly and then to the General Synod. This involved him in drafting church legislation, so returning to the kind of work he loved best. The so-called "Pastoral Measures", enabling the grouping of parishes and ministries, were among the matters with which he had to deal.

He held the post for eight years, also serving on the Church and State Commission, and as a creative lawyer he did much to free the Church from state interference in issues of "worship and doctrine". He went on to occupy a succession of largely voluntary church appointments. He became Vicar-General of the Province of Canterbury, Dean of the Arches (in effect the Church's most senior judge) and Commissary to the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's.

He took silk in 1973 at the age of 70, and was awarded a doctorate of civil law four years later. In 1979 he gave further evidence of his literary gifts by writing an amusing autobiography, *In on the Act*.

In parallel with his work for the Church of England, he became an active churchgoer in his retirement, serving as churchwarden at Chipping Campden. A tall, quietly spoken and scholarly man, he kept up his knowledge of the Classics and enjoyed studying the New Testament in its Greek texts together with a local group of similarly interested friends.

He married his wife, Zillah, a state-registered nurse, in 1930, after meeting her in the hospital where his mother was recovering from an operation. She died in 1987 but Kent, who lost his only daughter more than 30 years ago, is survived by a son.

WILLIAM ALLEN

William Allen, CBE, architect and architectural theorist, died on December 14 aged 84. He was born on June 29, 1914.

ALTHOUGH of Canadian origin, William Allen spent his professional life in Britain and earned a high reputation in two specialist fields: as an architectural scientist and as a teacher and lecturer. He had a long connection with the Building Research Station at Watford, which he joined in 1937, immediately after arriving in England, and where he was chief architect, 1953-61. He then became Principal of the Architectural Association School of Architecture, 1961-66.

In 1939 he published *Sound Transmission in Buildings* (written with R. Fitzmaurice), and he was to remain a leading expert on all aspects of architectural technology, especially acoustics and lighting. He and his partner, John Bickerdike, were frequently called on to advise on technical problems that had arisen in old and new buildings, and as acoustic and lighting consultants. They were the architects for the concert hall in Manchester for the Northern College of Music, notable for its acoustics, and were acoustic consultants for the Festival Hall in London and for the Gulbenkian Foundation concert hall and museum in Lisbon.



They continued their work as consultants long after Allen had retired from teaching and from full-time practice. For example, in 1988 Allen and his partners were asked to devise a comprehensive new lighting scheme for the Chapel Royal at Hampton Court Palace, built in the 16th century and later refurbished by Sir Christopher Wren and Grinling Gibbons. Although the chapel had not been touched by the fire of 1986, the lighting installed and altered over the years had made Gibbons's elaborate wood carving almost invisible, and the choristers and worshippers were unable to read in comfort. There was also a glare that made the wall decorations difficult to see. Bickerdike and Allen, working for the Property Services Agency, devised a lighting scheme that discreetly dealt with all these problems.

William Alexander Allen was born in Canada, the son of a surgeon. He was educated at schools in Winnipeg and at the University of Manitoba, where he won the gold medal for architecture in 1936. The previous year he had been awarded the silver medal of the Royal Institute of Architects of Canada. In 1938, the year after he came to England, he was elected an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects, of which he was to become a Fellow in 1965. He served on the council of the institute from 1953 until 1972 and again from 1982 until 1985.

He was also chairman of the Fire Research Advisory Committee, 1973-83, and president of the Institute of Acoustics, 1975-76. For this work and for his many papers on aspects of architectural science, he also won awards in Canada, America and Portugal. He was appointed CBE in 1980.

In 1938 he married Beatrice Mary Teresa Pearson, who survives him, along with their daughter and two sons.

BRYAN MACLEAN

Bryan MacLean, singer and guitarist, died on Christmas Day after a heart attack, aged 52. He was born in Los Angeles on September 25, 1946.

BRYAN MACLEAN was a member of the 1960s group Love, for whom he wrote *Alone Again Or*, one of the most enduring and evocative songs of the era. The band's truly creative period, under the leadership of the unpredictable Arthur Lee, was brief, curtailed by an unhealthy appetite for hard drugs. Yet by the time Love disintegrated they had recorded some unforgettable music and one classic, *Forever Changes* (1967), a record which continues to appear prominently in polls of the best albums of all time.

Within a year of producing their masterwork, the original band had fallen apart, and by 1970 MacLean had left the music business and found religion. He later re-emerged as a writer of Christian music, but he will always be remembered for his part in the soundtrack of that distant "summer of love" with which his group shared a name.

MacLean came from a wealthy home in the Hollywood Hills, where the composer Frederick Loewe, the writer of *My Fair Lady*, was a neighbour. He declared the boy a prodigy at the age of three, and MacLean grew up steeped in musicals rather than rock'n'roll. Liza Minnelli was an early girlfriend, and the two would sit at the piano together playing show tunes.

Yet by the early 1960s the Beatles had made the guitar irresistible and MacLean left high school to become a roadie for the Byrds. In 1965 he failed an audition to join the Monkees, when he was one of 437 hopefuls who replied to an advert in the *Hollywood Reporter*, but he soon joined forces with the maverick Lee in a band called the Grass Roots.

Most American groups of the time gravitated to San Francisco, but after changing their name to Love, the LA-based band built a reputation playing the clubs on Sunset Strip. A residency at Bido Lito's brought them to the attention of Jac Holzman, head of the Elektra label, home already to such folk artists as Judy Collins and Tom Paxton. Holzman was looking to break into the rock market, and Love became the first band he signed. The Doors were the second.

In 1966 and 1967, Love made three impressive albums, clearly influenced by the Byrds and the Beatles but with an interesting psychedelic strangeness all their own. Although Arthur Lee was the main writer, MacLean contributed some fine songs, including *Orange Skies*, *Old Man* and the haunting *Alone Again Or*, with its flamenco-style guitar and dramatic trumpet flourishes.

Unfortunately a combination of the drugs and Lee's unstable personality was rendering the band increasingly dysfunctional. There were lurid tales of group members robbing doughnut stands to support their drug addiction. "Their name should be Hate rather than Love," remarked Peter Albin, of the San Francisco band Big Brother and the Holding Company.

By 1968 Love had splintered, leaving Lee the sole original member. "At least two of them were irrepressibly hooked on heroin. I felt I needed to get out while the going was good,"



Bryan MacLean (far right) with the other members of Love in their late 1960s heyday

MacLean later said. Two of the group's members — Ken Forssi and John Echols — were soon serving prison sentences, but MacLean was also addicted. He secured a solo deal with Elektra, but abandoned music and became a born-again Christian. The turning point, he explained, was sitting in a New York bar and feeling his drink "turn to sand" in his mouth.

He returned to live with his parents in Los Angeles, did various manual jobs and obtained a real estate licence. But a Christian fellowship called the Vineyard was taking up increasing amounts of his time. He started singing at Friday night Bible classes, opened a Christian nightclub on Rodeo Drive called the Daisy, and served ten years in the ministry. He also began writing songs again, including several hits for country-tinged performers such as Debby Boone and Patty Loveless.

There were various attempts to re-form Love, which were hampered by arguments over past royalties and soured relations between MacLean and Lee, who is currently serving a 12-year sentence for firearms offences.

MacLean briefly led a band bearing his own name in the early 1980s which included his half-sister Maria McKee, but when she formed the critically acclaimed Lone Justice he was invited to contribute only as a writer.

In recent years there has been more interest than ever in the work of Love and its former members. *Ifyoubelievein*, released in 1997, was a collection of original MacLean demos and home recordings from the 1960s; *Alone Again Or* has recently been used in an American beer commercial; and at least two books about Love are in the pipeline. At the time of his death MacLean was working on what he called an album of "worship music".

MacLean is the second original member of Love to die within a year, after Forssi's death from cancer last January. He never married and is survived by his mother and a half-sister.

ON THIS DAY

January 1, 1935

Edward Hillman was a true transport pioneer. After he had built up a fleet of motor coaches starting with one car, he ran a cross-Channel air service; one of his first pilots was the famous woman flyer Amy Johnson.

MR. E. H. HILLMAN: AIRWAY PIONEER

Mr. Edward Henry Hillman, managing director of Hillman's Airways, Limited, and the former motorcoach proprietor, died suddenly at his home at Gidea Park, Essex, yesterday, aged about 45. He had been suffering from high blood pressure.

At one time in humble circumstances, Mr. Hillman rose to become one of the most important transport operators in Great Britain. He was the pioneer in this country of inland airways, and he later extended his services to Le Touquet and Paris. It was his boast that he never had a day's schooling. His mother died when he was only two years old, and he had to make his own way in life. When he was nine he obtained employment binding brushes. Two years later he joined the 2nd Battalion, The Essex Regiment, and was sent to Malta as a bandboy. He afterwards transferred to the cavalry and fought throughout the War, at the end of which he was a sergeant-major. Returning to civil life Mr. Hillman used his Army bounty to buy a motorcar, which he let out on hire. With the proceeds he opened a cycle repair shop in Romford.

It was as a motor-coach proprietor that Mr. Hillman built up the substantial foundations of the large business he controlled at the time of his death. They grew from very small beginnings. Mr. Hillman bought his first coach in 1928, and with himself as driver and his son as conductor ran a service between Romford and Chelmsford. It was at first far from successful, and on occasions it was necessary to borrow money to buy petrol. But at last success came to him. In time he was able to acquire more and more coaches until, by the beginning of 1930, he owned a fleet of over 200 and operated extensive services between London, Romford, and Chelmsford and along the East Coast.

His enterprise and initiative were unbounded. He was said to be the first motor-coach proprietor to offer penny fare stages and to issue motor-coach season tickets between the City and the suburbs. He was quick to see the possibilities of civil aviation and turned his attention to that mode of transport in the early part of 1932.

His initiative and organizing power again produced rapid development. He started with a small fleet of aeroplanes running between Romford, Ramsgate, Margate, Broadstairs, and Clacton. He extended his services to other parts of the country. He believed that aviation could be run on strictly business lines, and he startled civil air circles by offering air transport at 3d a mile a passenger — half the fare then usually charged. Early in 1933 he started an aeroplane service to Le Touquet, and in April of the same year inaugurated two services daily both ways between London and Paris. For a time he employed Amy Johnson as one of his cross-Channel pilots. She was the first woman to be so engaged.

The formation of Hillman's Airways, Limited, was announced on December 18, with an authorized capital of £150,000. Hillman's Airways, Limited, stated yesterday: "The business is being carried on as usual."

THE TIMES TODAY

NEWS

Euro dream becomes reality

European dreamers finally saw their cherished hope become reality at midnight when 11 countries signed away their sovereignty over monetary policy and the single currency was born.

The birth of the euro was marked in Brussels with a mass balloon launch and toast poured from methuselahs of champagne as ministers spoke of a great moment in history and set their sights on deeper political and economic union. But there were still sour notes amid the rhetoric.......Pages 1, 11, 12

Jenkins admits wine ban plan

Lord Jenkins of Hillhead admitted that in 1968 he was the architect of a secret Labour plan, codenamed Brutus, to ban foreign holidays and stop luxury imports. French wine, Swiss watches, avocados and out-of-season strawberries were are on the list to save the economy.......Pages 1, 4, 5

Refugee appeal

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, will today appeal for greater public understanding of the 50 million refugees throughout the world, who have been uprooted from their homes by persecution, war or natural disaster.......Page 2

Prescott 'on board'

John Prescott insisted he was "fully on board" Tony Blair's modernising crusade as he tried to repair the impression of a Cabinet riven by power struggles.......Page 2

Father's fight

A father told how he fought for three and a half hours to keep his nine-year-old son alive in icy waters after their fishing boat sank. As Lewis Vowles kept slipping into unconsciousness his father and two friends sang and cuddled the boy.......Page 3

Avalanche ordeal

The young couple buried beneath an avalanche told how they lay unable to move for 16 hours, not knowing if the other was alive or dead. Sarah Finch, 25, and Steven Newton, 24, were recovering from mild hypothermia.......Page 3

On the run

Charlie Whelan, The spin-doctor who prides himself on being just a mobile phone call away from journalists, was successfully evading a press manhunt.......Page 6

Missing girls hunt

Police are hoping that the discovery of a car belonging to a runaway couple who vanished with their two foster daughters will be a breakthrough.......Page 7

Migraine danger

YOUNG women who suffer from migraines are three times more at risk of a stroke. The danger increases if they smoke, take oral contraceptives or have high blood pressure.......Page 7

Hostage pressured

SECRET police forced a survivor of the Yemeni hostage massacre to change his testimony about how his wife died in the bungled rescue attempt, to remove any suggestion that Yemeni troops fired the fatal shot.......Page 9

Clinton holiday

The Clintons are seeing in the new year as usual at the upmarket resort of Hilton Head, off the coast of South Carolina. They have joined a crowd of other high achievers assembled for the annual off-the-record Renaissance Weekend.......Page 12

Railway sued

A Jewish Frenchman whose parents were deported by train and murdered by the Nazis at Auschwitz in the Second World War is suing the state-owned French railway for alleged "crimes against humanity".......Page 13

Happy new mm ... or something

Welcome to the year MIM, as the Emperor Flavius might have said. Then again, he might have preferred to wish his subjects a happy new MCMXCIX. Or should that be MCMXCVIII? Some guidance would have been useful: 23 centuries after the invention of Roman numerals, confusion reigns as to how they should be used to indicate the year 1999.......Page 1

TONY BARTHOLOMEW



Common seal pups at the seal hospital in Scarborough Sea Life Centre after rough seas had left them stranded on the shore

City tear: London is stepping up its campaign to win over hearts and minds among Europe's financial movers and shakers and prevent the City from losing its long-held pre-eminent place as Europe's financial centre.......Page 40

Carpetbagger: The Bradford & Bingley, the UK's second biggest building society, faces an attempt by a quantity surveyor to force it to convert into a bank and therefore make windfall payments to around 2.5 million people.......Page 40

Pensions: More than 100 small independent financial advisers have missed the deadline to organise compensation for clients in the first stage of the pensions mis-selling review, the Personal Investment Authority said last night.......Page 36

Cricket: Ashley Giles, the Warwickshire slow left-arm bowler who arrived in Australia on Tuesday as part of England's one-day squad, has been added to the party for the final Test when England have to win to draw the series.......Page 21

Football: Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal coach, gave a warning that the FA Carling Premiership was in danger of taking over from Italy's Serie A as the chosen abode for footballing cheats.......Page 21

Tennis: Petr Korda said that he had postponed his retirement after the findings of a positive drug test were recently made public.......Page 22

Rugby union: By the end of the season players in England should be in no doubt that the employers will control the market.......Page 25

Déjà view: Two things strike Richard Morrison about the cultural revolution of the 1990s. The first is that it *is* a revolution. Satellite, cable, digital and now interactive television, the home computer and the Internet — all these have changed leisure habits irrevocably..Page 29

Bear-baiters: Benedict Nightingale salutes a trio of Soviet playwrights who dared to defy Stalin, and paid the price.......Page 29

Raves from the grave: David Sinclair reviews the hits made up of songs that had sold millions for the likes of George Michael, Phil Collins and U2.......Page 30

These we will love: Caitlin Moran forecasts the rise of Beth Orton, the emergence of the Beta Band and the return of Oasis.......Page 31

Sloping on: Warm, windproof, long-lasting — and good for posing. It's the perfect ski suit.......Page 14

Iron man: Sean Bean used to be a welder in Sheffield. Now that he is one of Britain's sexiest actors, has he left his roots behind?.......Page 15

Business of learning: Can business leaders really make a difference in deprived corners of the educational system?.......Page 28

Eternal students: David Blunkett is raising the profile of his campaign for lifelong learning.......Page 28

Self-destructing: From his early ventures into spin, Peter Mandelson showed an excessively combative attitude.......Page 32

Better than sex: How popular newspapers have found something that sells more copies than scandals stories.......Page 33

It may take some days to sort fact from fiction but already the incident raises questions about terrorism in the region and the wisdom of tours which intentionally seek out "adventurous" destinations. "Adventure" tourism is also risky tourism that should always be approached with at least as much prudence as a sense of daring

-The Sydney Morning Herald

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

GIFT OF READING

■ Valerie Grove on why the reading bug is the best gift you can give your children

WRITE STUFF

■ Enter meg@'s young writer's competition and win £500 worth of children's books

Preview: A look at some favourite childrens' programmes (BBC1, 4.05) **Review:** A rare interview with Stanley Baxter.......Pages 38, 39

Pride of nations

Today Europe takes the biggest step ever towards unification. Outside EMU Britain may rediscover its historic role as a great trading nation, deeply involved in Europe, but always independent and looking outwards.......Page 17

Green sprouts

Rachel Carson's fierce polemic *The Silent Spring*, helped to plant the seeds of an environmental movement that flourished in the 1970s. The West took its first serious look beyond the moment, beyond the next set of economic figures, to a more distant future.......Page 17

Roman types

Debate is raging as to how 1999 should be written in Roman numerals. But despite the confusion, the use of these ancient numbers is still valid.......Page 17

ANTHONY HOWARD

The BBC remains an Establishment organisation at heart. Present its most talented film-makers with even the most antiquated and outdated part of our national fabric — and their automatic instinct will be to celebrate it.......Page 16

MARY-ANN SIEGHART

It was for Christmas 1997 that my husband gave me a pair of Rollerblades. Ever since, I have enjoyed a lasting enthusiasm.......Page 16

PAUL SYKES

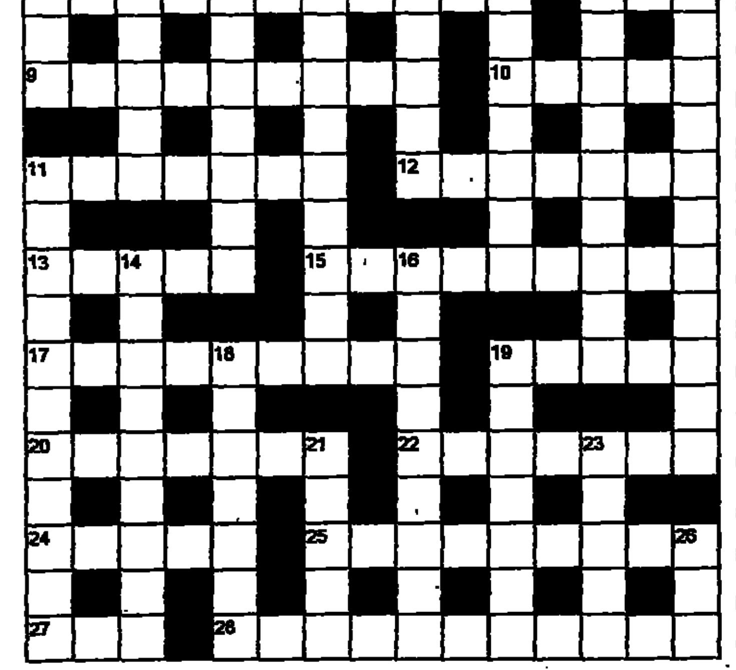
No one pretends we don't have problems, but they are not remotely of an order to compel us to abandon self-government.......Page 16

Michael Shearer, couturier; **Sir Harold Kent**, treasury solicitor; **William Allen**, architect; **Bryan MacLean**, singer.......Page 19

Britain and "Euroland"; decline in wild birds; Mandelson's fall; avalanche ; yachting pioneers.Page 17

3, 13, 18, 24, 34, 49. Bonus: 33

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,989



ACROSS

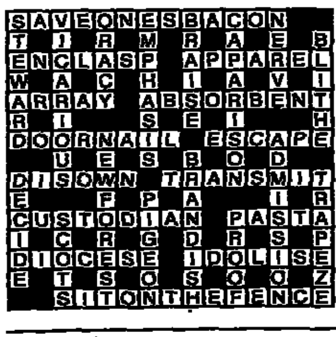
1 First issue in 1999, for example (5,6).
7 Insect likely to be problematic in a year (3).
9 Religious system uniting man and woman (9).
10 Love in Paris that would be non-U in Rome? (5).
11 What interrogator says producing expression of amazement (1,3,3).
12 Immediate response in letter 1 posted (7).
13 Test depth of Channel (5).
15 Diver retrieved piece for explosive device (5-4).
17 Invalidate right to make changes on record (9).
19 Musician with piano in place of seaside entertainment (5).
20 News that is initially brought by sound of bells (7).
22 Every course provides this sort of bet (4,3).
24 American and I leave China, for Spain (5).
25 Standard criticism attached to London police (9).
27 She just makes it into the first eleven (3).
28 Arrived early this morning, i.e. trod off street to get drunk? (5-6).

DOWN

1 Seize illegal substance (3).
2 Thoughts of leader of assassins during fateful day? (5).
3 Tried to get editor to join paper (7).
4 Not fully understood how one's lacking basic domestic facilities (9).
5 One who acquires a farm building (as opposed to cellar, say) (5).
6 Again request harvest work (7).
7 Servant with carriage that helped to get Wellington on (9).
8 Politicians following Eden into social gathering (6,5).
11 Advantageous position – not the first part of record? (6,5).
14 Encouragement after slipping up, for example, about platform (3-1-5).
16 Improperly assigned to throne before time in succession (2,3,4).
18 Put down 'phone – no longer engaged? (4,3).
19 One accepted by Constable as likewise a great artist (7).
21 Sounds like sort of horse, one that starts nervously (5).
23 Bridge-player's abandoned this? (5).
26 Child that's looked after by nanny (3).

Times Two Crossword, page 40

Solution to Puzzle No 20,988



SAVEONESBACON
T I R M R A E B
ENCLASP APPAREL
W A C H I A V I
ARRAY ABSORBENT
R I S E I H
DOORNAIL ESCAPE
U E S B O D
DISOWN TRANSMIT
E F P A I R
CUSTODIAN PASTA
I C R G D R S P
DIOCESE IDOLISE
E T S O S O O Z
SITONTHEFENCE

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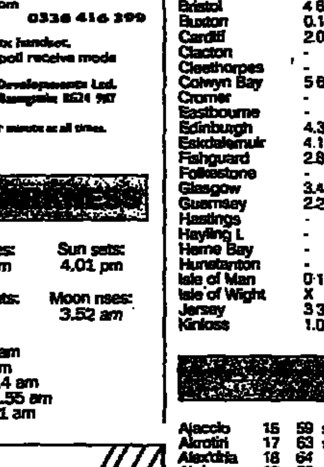
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Moon sets: - — Moon rises: 3.52 am

Full moon tomorrow

London 4.01 pm to 8.06 am
Bristol 3.42 pm to 8.46 am
Edinburgh 3.19 pm to 9.14 am
Manchester 3.30 pm to 8.55 am
Penzance 4.00 pm to 8.51 am

□ **General:** cloudy. SW England, Wales and NW England will have outbreaks of rain including heavier bursts on coasts and hills. Rain in N Ireland this morning will spread into W Scotland, but far northwest may see sunny spells. E Scotland drizzly. Tonight rain will spread from N Ireland, W Scotland, Wales and SW England to E England and E Scotland. Windy; winds approaching gale-force in E Scotland.

□ **London, SE, Cent S, E, NE England, E Anglia:** mostly dull with cloud, a little drizzle, fairly mild. Mod S wind. Max (54F).

□ **Midlands, Cent N England:** cloudy, quite mild, mostly dry, occasional spells of sunshine. Mod S wind. Max 10C (50F).

□ **Channel Is, SW, NW England, Wales, Lake District, IoM:** dull, cloudy; rain in morning, heaviest over hills, where it will be misty. Fresh SW wind. Max 11C (52F).

□ **Bordrs, E'burgh & D'dee, A'deen, Moray Frth, NE Scotland, Orkny, Shetland:** dull, cloudy, some light rain and drizzle, mild. Fresh to strong SE wind. Max 9C (48F).

□ **SW Scotld, Gl'gow, Cent Highlands:** cloudy; showers, prolonged in afternoon — heavy bursts. Fresh SE wind. Max 9C (48F).

□ **Argyll, NW Scotland:** early sun; increasingly cloudy, Rain this afternoon. Strong SE wind. Max 9C (48F).

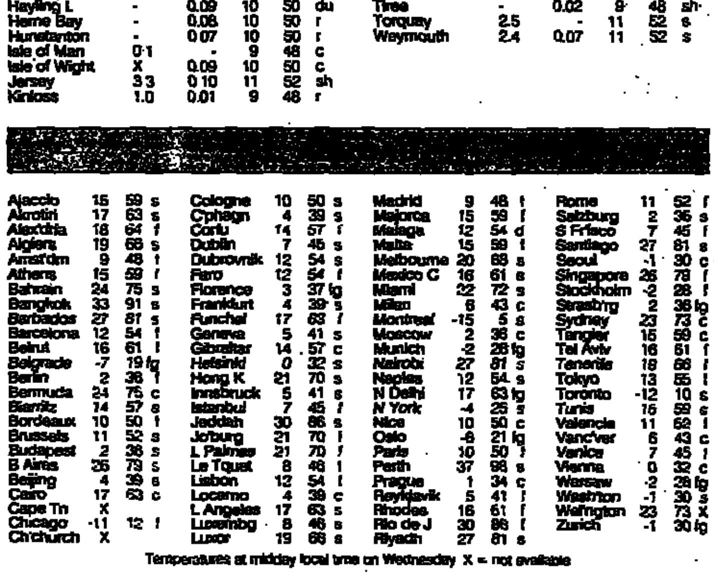
□ **N Ireland:** early rain in north; brighter, more showery later; more rain in SW this evening. Fresh SW wind. Max 10C (50F).

□ **Rep of Ireland:** windy; showery rain — sometimes heavy. Brief dry spell in afternoon; wet, windy evening. Max 10C (50F)

□ **Outlook:** overnight rain will clear; sunny spells and showers tomorrow. Further rain on Sunday. Mild but breezy.

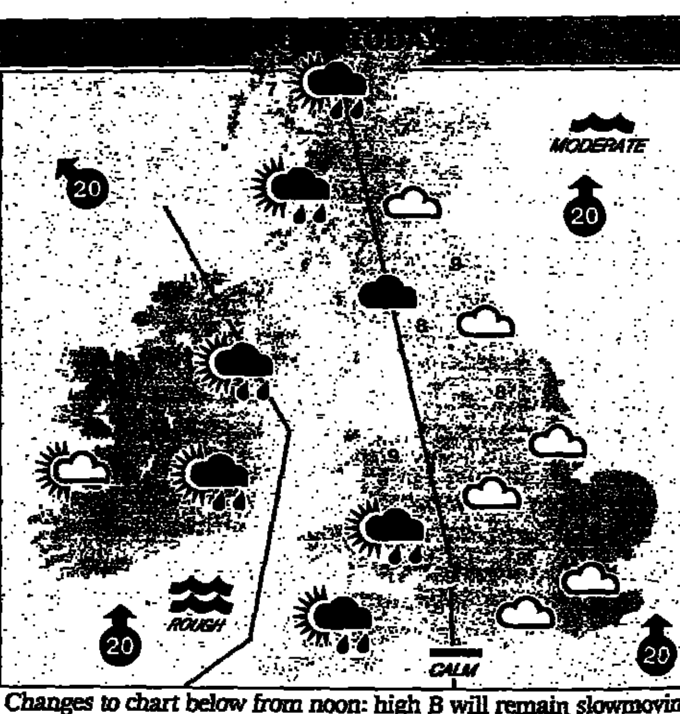
24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gales, h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	-	0.04	8	46	r
Anglesey	3.4	-	10	50	b
Aspatria	4.4	-	9	48	s
Aviemore	0.9	0.01	8	46	c
Belfast	-	0.01	8	46	r
Birmingham	0.2	0.01	8	46	r
Bognor R	-	0.08	10	50	sh
Bournemth	1.2	0.01	12	54	b
Bristol	4.6	0.02	11	52	b
Buxton	0.1	0.01	7	45	c
Cardiff	2.0	0.02	10	50	b
Clacton	-	0.07	8	46	r
Cleethorpes	-	0.02	9	48	r
Colwyn Bay	5.6	0.01	9	48	s
Cromer	-	0.04	9	48	du
Eastbourne	-	0.02	10	50	c
Edinburgh	4.3	-	9	48	s
Eskdalemuir	4.1	0.05	8	46	s
Fishguard	2.8	0.01	9	48	r
Folkestone	-	0.11	10	50	r
Glasgow	3.4	-	9	48	s
Guernsey	2.2	0.01	11	52	sh
Hastings	-	0.12	10	50	r
Hayling L	-	0.09	10	50	du
Herne Bay	-	0.08	10	50	r
Hunstanton	-	0.07	10	50	r
Isle of Man	0.1	-	9	48	c
Isle of Wight	X	0.09	10	50	c
Jersey	3.3	0.10	11	52	sh
Kinloss	1.0	0.01	9	48	r
Leeds	2.1	0.04	10	50	b
Lerwick	-	0.01	7	45	r
Leuchars	1.7	0.03	9	48	b
London	-	0.08	11	52	r
Lowestoft	-	0.15	8	46	c
Manchester	2.6	0.01	9	48	s
Margate	-	0.03	10	50	r
Morecombe	3.9	0.01	10	50	b
Newcastle	0.2	0.01	9	48	c
Norwich	-	0.06	9	48	r
Oxford	0.3	0.03	9	48	r
Poole	0.5	0.01	11	52	c
Prestatyn	6.6	-	9	48	s
Ross on Wye	0.2	-	10	50	c
Saunton Sands	1.5	-	11	52	b
Scarborough	-	0.05	10	50	sh
Shrewsbury	3.6	-	9	48	b
Skegness	-	0.06	8	46	sh
Southport	X	-	X	X	c
Stornoway	2.3	0.04	8	46	b
Swanage	3.7	0.01	11	52	b
Teignmouth	0.9	0.01	11	52	c
Tenby	-	0.01	10	50	c
Tiree	-	0.02	9	48	sh
Torquay	2.5	-	11	52	s
Weymouth	2.4	0.07	11	52	s

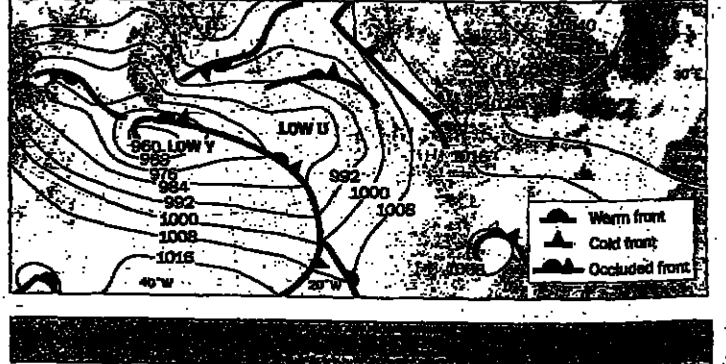


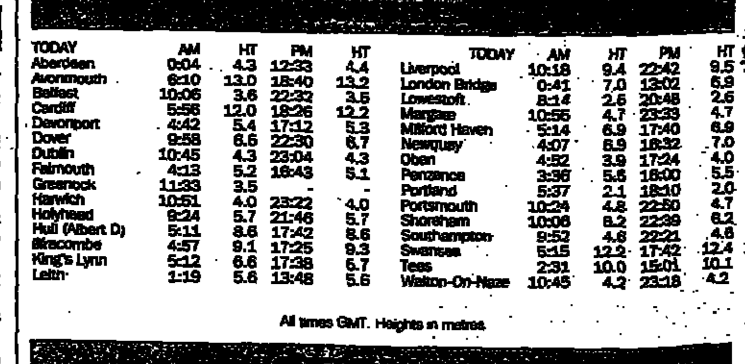
	C	F	
Ajaccio	15	59	s
Akrotiri	17	63	s
Alex'dria	18	64	f
Algiers	19	66	s
Amst'dm	9	48	t
Athens	15	59	f
Bahrain	24	75	s
Bangkok	33	91	s
Barbados	27	81	s
Barcelona	12	54	f
Beirut	16	61	f
Belgrade	-7	19	fg
Berlin	2	36	f
Bermuda	24	75	c
Biarritz	14	57	s
Bordeaux	10	50	f
Brussels	11	52	s
Budapest	2	36	s
B Aires	26	79	s
Beijing	4	39	s
Cairo	17	63	c
Cape Tn	X		
Chicago	-11	12	f
Ch'church	X		
Cologne	10	50	s
C'phagn	4	39	s
Corfu	14	57	f
Dublin	7	45	s
Dubrovnik	12	54	s
Faro	12	54	f
Florence	3	37	fg
Frankfurt	4	39	s
Funchal	17	63	f
Geneva	5	41	s
Gibraltar	14	57	c
Helsinki	0	32	s
Hong K	21	70	s
Innsbruck	5	41	s
Istanbul	7	45	f
Jeddah	30	86	s
Jo'burg	21	70	f
L Palmas	21	70	f
Le Tquet	8	46	f
Lisbon	12	54	f
Locarno	4	39	c
L Angeles	17	63	s
Luxmbg	8	46	s
Luxor	19	66	s
Madrid	9	48	f
Majorca	15	59	f
Malaga	12	54	d
Malta	15	59	f
Melbourne	20	68	s
Mexico C	16	61	s
Miami	22	72	s
Milan	6	43	c
Montreal	-15	5	s
Moscow	2	36	c
Munich	-2	28	fg
Nairobi	27	81	s
Naples	12	54	s
N Delhi	17	63	fg
N York	-4	25	s
Nice	10	50	c
Oslo	-6	21	fg
Paris	10	50	f
Perth	37	98	s
Prague	1	34	c
Reykjavik	5	41	f
Rhodes	16	61	f
Rio de J	30	86	f
Riyadh	27	81	s
Rome	11	52	f
Salzburg	2	36	s
S Frisco	7	45	f
Santiago	27	81	s
Seoul	-1	30	c
Singapore	26	79	f
Stockholm	-2	28	f
Strasb'rg	2	36	fg
Sydney	23	73	c
Tangier	15	59	c
Tel Aviv	16	61	f
Tenerife	18	66	f
Tokyo	13	55	f
Toronto	-12	10	s
Tunis	15	59	s
Valencia	11	52	f
Vanc'ver	6	43	c
Venice	7	45	f
Vienna	0	32	c
Warsaw	-2	28	fg
Wash'ton	-1	30	s
Wel'ngton	23	73	X
Zurich	-1	30	fg

Temperatures at midday local time on Wednesday X = not available



Changes to chart below from noon: high B will remain slowmoving with little change; low U will move northeast and lose its identity; low Y will run east and fill slightly





TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	0:04	4.3	12:33	4.4
Avonmouth	6:10	13.0	18:40	13.2
Belfast	10:06	3.6	22:32	3.5
Cardiff	5:56	12.0	18:26	12.2
Devonport	4:42	5.4	17:12	5.3
Dover	9:58	6.6	22:30	6.7
Dublin	10:45	4.3	23:04	4.3
Falmouth	4:13	5.2	16:43	5.1
Greenock	11:33	3.5	-	-
Harwich	10:51	4.0	23:22	4.0
Holyhead	9:24	5.7	21:46	5.7
Hull (Albert D)	5:11	8.6	17:42	8.6
Ilfracombe	4:57	9.1	17:25	9.3
King's Lynn	5:12	6.6	17:38	6.7
Leith	1:19	5.6	13:48	5.6
Liverpool	10:18	9.4	22:42	9.5
London Bridge	0:41	7.0	13:02	6.9
Lowestoft	8:14	2.6	20:48	2.6
Margate	10:55	4.7	23:33	4.7
Milford Haven	5:14	6.9	17:40	6.9
Newquay	4:07	6.9	16:32	7.0
Oban	4:52	3.9	17:24	4.0
Penzance	3:36	5.6	16:00	5.5
Portland	5:37	2.1	18:10	2.0
Portsmouth	10:24	4.8	22:50	4.7
Shoreham	10:06	6.2	22:39	6.2
Southampton	9:52	4.6	22:21	4.6
Swansea	5:15	12.2	17:42	12.4
Tees	2:31	10.0	15:01	10.1
Walton-On-Naze	10:45	4.2	23:18	4.2

All times GMT. Heights in metres.

Yesterday: highest day max: Bournemouth, 12C (54F); lowest day max: Loch Glascarnoch, 5C (41F); most rain: Camborne, 0.89in, highest sunshine: Prestatyn, 6.6hr

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THE TIMES 2

FRIDAY JANUARY 1 1999

Warwickshire left-armer hurriedly brought into party in place of Croft

England call on Giles for spin option

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, IN SYDNEY

AT THE end of a tumultuous week, England have come up with a showstopper. Determined that they should not have the thunder of their Melbourne victory stolen by Australia conjuring up Shane Warne for the final Test in Sydney starting tomorrow, England produced their own spin surprise yesterday, direct from wintry Warwickshire.

Ashley Giles's life story is *not quite the soap opera that* Warne claimed his to be. Indeed, *he is so anonymous on* the world stage that the press conference he conducted yesterday was halfway through before the Australian journalists present worked out who he was.

The only valid comparison between Warne and Giles is the unflattering one that both are prone to putting on weight. Yet England have decided that this journeyman slow left-armer may have an influential role in their bid to square the series by winning here for the first time in 20 years.

Giles, who arrived in Australia on Tuesday as part of the one-day squad, has officially been added to the Test party, and the prospect of a quite staggering selection later gained tacit acknowledgement *from the team management.*

While Giles practises in Sydney *today, Robert Croft* will play in a limited-overs game at Sir Donald Bradman's native *village of Bowral. Croft* is crestfallen, as well he might be. He has already had to accept the loss of his senior spin bowling role to Peter Such, but finding himself further relegated by someone who was not even chosen for the tour is the height of indignity.

The faith in Giles, 25, is a further indictment of the quality of slow bowling in England. He has made his reputation bowling economically in one-day cricket and is not a big spinner of the ball. He was unfortunate to play his only previous Test on a moribund pitch at Old Trafford last July, taking one for 106 against South Africa, but there was little promise of better to come.

Giles is not yet sure to play, *for a number of permutations* remain open. Even the possibility, *though, is a remarkably* frank admission that the *initial selection* was *flawed.* The only point in including two spinners rather than just one was that both might play on a turning pitch in Sydney. Now that theory has been abandoned. Of course, Giles offers something different but the selectors knew that when they omitted both *him and* Philip Tufnell last September. *To even consider throwing in* a bowler whose activity in the *past three months* consists of "a few indoor nets in Birmingham" smacks of desperation.

Alec Stewart, the captain, had not looked at the Test pitch by last night but suggested that England would play only four bowlers. "We haven't discounted two seamers and two spinners," he said, opening up all kinds of other bewildering possibilities.

Assuming that Darren Gough will lead the attack, England would then have to exclude either Alan Mullally, who has been much their best containing bowler, or Dean Headley, whose wickets won them the game in Melbourne.

Angus Fraser is definitely demoted again but the only way in which England could field three seam bowlers, and still play their two spinners, would be through Stewart captaining, keeping wicket and opening the batting. *Last night,* he was still resisting such an *option. "It's highly unlikely we* would do that," he said. But in *this of all weeks, no one* would bet against it.

After a free day at their beachside hotel, England will be *practising early and trying* to resolve selections they cannot afford to get wrong. High on their list of worries was the continuing poor form of Michael Atherton, who is averaging 16 in the series. Stewart admitted: "It's been disappointing, because we generally bat around Athers. If he bats all day, it guarantees us a good total. It's difficult to say what his problem is and he can't put his finger on it but he played very well in the summer and can do so again."

Atherton may be inspired by the ground on which he made his first overseas Test century, eight years ago, following it with scores of 88 and 67 in the corresponding game in 1995. Right now, he needs inspiration from somewhere. Stewart sharply resisted the *suggestion that it might prove* to be Atherton's farewell Test. "People wrote *him* off when he gave up the captaincy and he made a hundred *in his* next Test," he recalled. "He'll keep playing and he'll feature strongly against New Zealand next summer."

Nasser Hussain should return to No 3, from where *he* ought not to have been moved, and *Mark Ramprakash,* England's leading batsman in the *series* with an average of 58, will come in next. Graeme *Hick will feel he is owed a* century here, Atherton having infamously declared with *him* on *98 four years ago,* but *it is* the sixth batting position that *could see another surprise.*

Mark Butcher, the only Englishman to make a century in the series until Stewart's 107 in *Melbourne, has been margin*alised both by his own ailing *form* and Stewart's return to the head of the order. Against *the spin attack promised, John* Crawley may now be re*prieved from a miserable tour* to win another cap at No 6.

Two days before the *game* begins, the pitch had more *grass on it than might have* been expected but also con*tained some cracks and bare* patches. The *Australians* are so convinced it will turn that *they are favouring three spin* bowlers, the leg breaks of *Warne and Stuart MacGill* augmented by the off spin of *Colin Miller, who will also* double up bowling seamers.

Sydney is a city in a state of obsessive upheaval as it pre*pares for the Olympics next* year. Tomorrow, though, at*tention will briefly return to* cricket and the ground will be *a throng of expectancy.* There is suddenly a series in doubt. *Warne is back, and there may* even be some chap called *Giles playing.*

TEAMS

ENGLAND (from): A J Stewart (captain), M A Atherton, M A Butcher, N Hussain, M R Ramprakash, G A Hick, *J P Crawley, W K Hegg, R D B Croft,* A F Giles, D W Headley, D Gough, A D Mullally, P M Such.

AUSTRALIA (from): M A Taylor (captain), M J Slater, J L Langer, M E Waugh, S R Waugh, D S Lehmann, I A Healy, S K Warne, S C G MacGill, D *W Fleming, C R Miller, G D McGrath.*



ADRIAN MURRELL / ALLSPORT

Giles, who took only one wicket in his previous Test at Old Trafford last summer, could be thrust into action tomorrow

Pakistan players face mounting evidence

A JUDICIAL commission yesterday warned Wasim Akram and Salim Malik, two former captains of Pakistan, that there was enough evidence to punish them over allegations of match-fixing, officials said.

Twelve players had been summoned over the allegations but only eight responded, according to Ali Sibtain Fazli, the Pakistan Cricket Board's legal adviser.

The commission issued bailable warrants against Rashid Latif, a wicketkeeper, for his failure to turn up for cross-examination, Fazli said. Rashid, who is attending to his sick father, criticised the working of the commission in a press interview on Wednesday. Fazli said: "His remarks can come under contempt of court and the judge was furious."

Wasim, Malik, Ijaz Ahmed, Mushtaq Ahmed and Waqar Younis — all allegedly involved in match-fixing and betting — yesterday cross-examined their accusers.

Aamir Sohail, the present Pakistan captain, Aqib Javed, the fast bowler, and Intikhab Alam, the former team manager, who had accused the players of involvement in illegal practices, were in court.

Wenger demands action over 'divers and cheats'

BY OLIVER HOLT, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

STILL smarting from the latest controversial addition to his club's disciplinary roll of shame, Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, last night launched a scathing attack on the ethical degeneration of English football and warned that the FA Carling Premiership was in danger of taking over *from* Italy's Serie A as the chosen abode for cheats.

Wenger's *criticism* was prompted by the dismissal of Patrick Vieira, *his France* midfield player, against Charlton Athletic at The Valley on *Monday.* Vieira was shown the red card after he had elbowed Neil Redfearn, who collapsed theatrically to the ground clutching *his face.* Replays showed, however, that Vieira had made contact only with his chest.

Wenger, angered by the apparent *refusal of Uriah* Rennie, the referee, to reconsider his decision even *in the light* of video evidence, said yesterday that Vieira, no stranger to trouble since his move to Highbury from AC Milan 2½ years ago, was bewildered by his treatment. Wenger is worried *that what* he saw as persecution of Vieira might drive him away *from* England.

The Arsenal manager also made it *plain* that he saw Redfearn's actions as symptomatic of a trend *in the* English game that is fast undermining its reputation as *the home* of football that may be breathless and uncompromising but is, above all things, honest and fair. Foreign players had led the way, he said, but their English colleagues were following *their lead.*

"The problem of diving is growing *in England,*" Wenger said, "and I do not like it. I always used *to* like watching English games because there was none of that. But now it *is* growing more and more prevalent. I sometimes sit at home and watch Italian football on a Sunday afternoon and I have to change over and watch the English division one game be*cause in* Italy the players are falling down all the time. Now, *it* is happening in the Premiership, too.

"Patrick *did not* deserve to be sent off, but Redfearn cheated the referee. I agree that usually. Redfearn is not that type of player, but maybe he wanted Charlton to win so much, he was prepared to do anything. Patrick caught him in the chest, but he went down holding his face. It was only a red card because it was Patrick who was involved.

"I accept that the referee may have been unsighted and that he felt that *Patrick* had caught Redfearn in the face, but what *disappoints* me more is that he will not reconsider. *If he* won't look at it again, then it tells me he does not care. He just thinks he is right.

"Maybe some foreign players have brought this kind of behaviour into the country but some English players are picking it up very quickly. No matter what nationality they are, I *do not like* players behaving like cheats. I want my players to concentrate on winning and playing the right way, not kicking or diving. France are world champions and they did not kick or dive and when England won the World Cup, they did not achieve it by diving."

Wenger, whose Arsenal side has collected 19 red cards in *his short tenure at the club,* including six so far this season, did not *stop there. As he* talked about how Vieira was determined to overcome the problems that were besieging him, he called for new measures to be introduced to punish cheats more heavily.

As he was speaking, news was filtering through from the North East that Paul Danson, the referee who sent off two *Sunderland* players in a match against Arsenal two years ago, *had been switched* away from their FA Cup third-round tie against *Lincoln City* tomorrow, so seeming to confirm the growing antipathy between clubs and officials.

Wenger, though, did not join *the ongoing debate about the* inconsistency of refereeing, which *Alex Ferguson raised* again in the wake of the failure of Mike Riley *to dismiss* Frank Leboeuf during *Chelsea's match with Man*chester United on Tuesday. In*stead, he expanded on a sort of* disciplinary blueprint he has *formulated in his mind, an* antithesis of a cheats' charter.

"Players who go down in the area without being fouled and looking for a penalty should be shown the red card immediately," Wenger said. "If it happens anywhere else on the pitch, they should be booked. It is hard for referees without video evidence, but there is a way around that, too.

"One solution would be to *send a copy of every Premier* League game for review. Any player who was caught on video cheating could be given a red card retrospectively and suspended accordingly. It happens in France. If you show players cards for this behaviour, they will stop doing it.

"Instead, we have a situation now where Patrick has reached the *stage* where *he* does not know what to do any *more. He is very down. If he* had to go elsewhere to get *away from this kind of thing,* it would be a sad day for English football. *I hope it does not* come to that."

RED MIST

Arsenal players sent off since Arsène Wenger became manager in August 1996:

1996-97: Nov 26: S Bould (v Liverpool). Nov 30: T Adams (v Newcastle United). Dec 21: I Wright (v Nottingham Forest). Jan 1: J Hartson (v Middlesbrough). Jan 11: D Bergkamp (v Sunderland). May 11: Adams (v Derby County).

1997-98: July 30: P Vieira and M Upson (v PSV Eindhoven). Oct 14: J Crowe (v Birmingham City). Oct 26: E Petit (v Aston Villa). Jan 17: Vieira (v Coventry City). Feb 18: Vieira (v Chelsea). Mar 17: Bergkamp (v West Ham United).

1998-99: Aug 29: Petit (v Charlton Athletic). Sept 9: L Dixon (v Chelsea). Sept 26: M Keown (v Sheffield Wednesday). Nov 25: R Parlour (v Lens). Dec 20: G Grimandi (v Leeds United). Dec 28: Vieira (v Charlton Athletic).





Wenger believes Vieira has become a target for referees

Tomorrow in the SATURDAY TIMES

"Relegation with Middlesbrough was a shock because I thought I was a good manager. Now I've got my belief back"

MANAGING VERY NICELY NOW

Bryan Robson talks to **OLIVER HOLT**

WHAT A WEEK! FRANK LEBOEUF on friends, foes and fouls

13 pages and the finest columnists: **Alyson Rudd, Michael Lynagh, *Lynne Truss,* Robert Elms and Simon Barnes**

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Majestic Meissnitzer carrying all before her

John Hopkins meets the Austrian who has been leaving her rivals trailing



Meissnitzer competes in the women's giant slalom at Semmering last Sunday. She suffered a rare defeat but extended her World Cup lead in the process

The World Cup circus has been winding its way through the Alps for almost a month now and at almost every stop Austrian men and women are establishing a rare dominance.

In the men's events Hermann Maier is performing as if his life depended on it. Maier, the double Olympic gold medal-winner, and his compatriots made history before Christmas by taking the first nine places in a World Cup super-giant slalom at Innsbruck. Last Tuesday, Maier and company confirmed that was no fluke by taking eight of the top ten places in a downhill in Bormio, Italy.

Alexandra Meissnitzer, who, carving her turns and gliding with ease from victory to victory, is leading the way for Austria's women and has already built up a 325-point lead over Martina Ertl, of Germany, in the World Cup.

Meissnitzer has had five victories in three different disciplines and three further podium places. The 25-year-old is favourite to continue her domination by winning a super-giant slalom in Maribor, Slovenia today.

In Austria, Christmas Eve is the day when they gather to celebrate and Meissnitzer made sure she was at home with her parents and her younger brother and sister, in Abtenau, to celebrate. Her father, a mechanic, and her mother were busying themselves with last-minute chores before the family sat down to the traditional dish of fish.

"Here,' this is a big house," Meissnitzer said in her excellent English, as light snowflakes fell outside. "On the second floor I have my own living room and bedroom. I still have my parents for washing my clothes and cooking dinner. We have a good relationship. I do not hide anything from them and they treat me responsibly. It is best for me. I am three minutes by car from a chair lift."

Abtenau is a village in Salzburg, one of Austria's nine provinces, the part of the country that has taken over from St Anton as the new breeding ground for Austrian ski champions.

Maier was born in Flachau, a village in a narrow valley not far from Abtenau, and Andreas Schifferer, winner of four World Cup downhills, comes from Radstadt, a few miles away. Also in the Pongau region is Weinarl where the great skier Ann-Marie Moser-Pröll has a café.

So a friendship and rivalry among local friends has contributed to Austria's success. So, too, have the techniques of Chijong, taught to Meissnitzer by Werner Tautermann, who also works with Andreas Goldberger, an Austrian ski jumper.

"I used to get excited, nervous, hectic," Meissnitzer said. "I would be a good skier in training and then not reproduce it in a race. Werner has taught me how to remain calm. If I am first in the first run, that is no problem. I can handle any situation. Good results have built my self-confidence."

Gliding has not been a strength of Meissnitzer's skiing but this weakness has been improved recently by the use of skis supplied by Völkl after Atomic, the Austrian manufacturer, elected to sponsor the Germany women's team. Then there are the techniques of Karl Frehsner, the Austria women's coach, who used to train the Switzerland men's team.

Well-trained, fit and supported generously by a ski federation with an eye on the publicity for the country's tourism industry, the Austria skiers have an air of happiness and satisfaction about them.

"We had very good summer training on the glacier in Zermatt," Meissnitzer said. "We have a good federation with plenty of money and good trainers. Maybe some of the other teams do not have the same money as we do. I don't know exactly why Austria is so dominant at present, but I like it. I train with Anita Wachter in the Gs, with Sabine Egger in the slalom and Renate Götschl in the downhill and super-G. They are among the best in the world. If in training you are doing the same times as these skiers, you know you're good."


Meissnitzer: dominant

Meissnitzer was three years old when she first skied and, almost from that moment, her ambition was to become a racer. "Petra Kronberger was my hero," Meissnitzer said. "I saw her winning all the time and I thought it was very impressive that she did it all so quickly. I watched her until she quit when I was 18. She was most impressive. She was always doing the right thing. In training, even though she was the best, she always did more work than anyone else. I am one who must work really hard. I know I have a gift from God to ski well but so have others."

Meissnitzer skis the downhill, giant and super giant slalom disciplines and generally wins them too, though Wachter inflicted a rare defeat on her in a giant slalom in Semmering last Sunday. Two days later Wachter suffered small tears to her right ankle in training, and is doubtful for the technical events at Maribor.

"Alexandra has lots of self-confidence and knows what to do," Wachter said last month. "She is clearly the favourite for the season. She is so strong in the head." Deborah Compagnoni, the Italian skier, added: "In racing, the mental side of the sport is as important as the physical side. It is difficult to remain in form at the highest level for any length of time but for now Alexandra certainly has it."

SAILING

Soldini is on course to redeem himself

By Edward Gorman
Sailing Correspondent

AFTER his dreadful performance in the first leg, Giovanni Soldini, the maverick Italian single-hander, was on course to restore lost pride with an impressive win in the second leg of the Around Alone Race yesterday. Barring the unexpected, Soldini should bring FILA into the finish at Auckland today.

The Italian was clearly unnerved by getting his routing so badly wrong in the first leg and will be delighted to have found his form over the demanding 7,000-mile traverse of the southern Indian Ocean. Having arrived in South Africa in fifth place and nearly three days behind Mike Golding, the Briton leading the race, Soldini was last night looking able to reduce that deficit by a day.

Soldini apart, however, this leg is proving another excellent one for Golding, who can afford to lose a bit of time to his Italian rival. His main aim was to increase his leverage over Isabelle Autissier, who was 2½ hours behind him into Cape Town, and Marc Thiercelin, who was ten hours behind. Yesterday Golding was 200 miles behind Soldini but 250 ahead of Autissier and Thiercelin, who are battling for third and fourth places.

With 400 miles still to sail to Auckland, the confident Golding was already planning his campaign for the third leg. "I want to get in, not so much for the break, but so we can fix the boat and carry on," he said. "It's frustrating sailing with so many small breakages."

The other outstanding performance of this leg has been that of J. P. Mouligne, the Frenchman who has sailed a masterful race in his Class 2 Open 50, Cray Valley. It is a slower boat in most conditions than Mike Garside's Magellan Alpha, yet, with 670 miles to go to the finish, Mouligne has a comfortable 460-mile cushion over his British rival.

What is more, the Frenchman is just a few miles behind Autissier and Thiercelin and a long way ahead of Josh Hall, of Great Britain, although each of them has more powerful machinery than he has.

Garside was not afraid to congratulate Mouligne yesterday as he chased him across the Tasman Sea. "I am totally impressed," he said. "J. P. has sailed a flawless race."

Drugs case forces world No 13 to delay retirement in order to clear his name

Korda seeks clean break by playing on

Jon Green in Doha finds the Czech tennis player protesting his innocence despite positive steroid test

PETR KORDA announced yesterday that he had planned to retire from tennis this Christmas, but has since changed his mind after the findings of a positive drug test have recently been made public. The Czech No 1 arrived here to begin preparations for the Qatar Open, a tournament that he won in 1996 and again last year.

The Qatar Open is the first event in which Korda has played since the International Tennis Federation (ITF) fined him $94,529 (£57,000) and deducted 199 ranking points after testing positive at Wimbledon for the banned steroid nandrolone. The 1998 Australian Open champion has now vowed to continue playing for at least another year in a bid to clear his name.

Korda, 30, decided that 1998 would be his final year on the circuit after he had won back-to-back tournaments in Qatar and Australia earlier this year. "I wanted to play the season and then retire, but I couldn't retire in such circumstances," he said yesterday. "I now just want one or two more years to show people what Petr Korda is capable of on the tennis court."

Korda remains confident of his innocence and, despite a guilty verdict from the ITF, he believes that the failure to impose a ban demonstrates that they believed his defence that no substance was consciously taken. "I have never cheated and I have never taken any steroid to increase my performance on the court," Korda said. "When I first heard the news I thought it was a bad joke, and it became a very difficult time for me and my family.

"But now I am very happy with the decision of the committee, which has shown that I am innocent because I didn't knowingly take anything to raise my performance. I am 100 per cent natural and not into anabolic steroids."

Korda remains baffled as to how the traces of nandrolone showed up in the samples that he gave at Wimbledon after losing his quarter-final match against Tim Henman. "I did injure my foot that week but all the evidence that I've been able to piece together shows that everything I took was clean," he said.

"When I have an injection I always ask what is in it, but sometimes you just have to trust the person who administers it. If I had any knowledge about how I came into contact with the steroid then I could set out to clear my name. But now I suppose I will always have a black mark on my back for the rest of my life and never be able to clean it off. I know that not many people believe me, but I have to defend myself and continue saying that I did not take anything."

The world No 13 maintains that he remains fully supportive of the anti-doping programme that is carried out by both the ITF and the Association of Tennis Professionals, to ensure that tennis remains a relatively untainted and drug-free sport.

However, it is likely that many within the game will question the message sent to the rest of the tennis community by the decision not to ban Korda. Goran Ivanisevic, who arrived here on Tuesday to compete in the $1 million event, said that if a player is guilty of taking nandrolone then he should be handed a ban, regardless of the circumstances.

"Last year I was tested nine times and I can tell you, it's a pain," he said. "The players will question tests continuing if no serious action is brought for a positive test."

He denied, though, that there would be ill-feeling between the other players and Korda. "Yes, it's not good for the game, but it's a matter for Petr and the ITF to sort out."

Korda's long-term aim is to get a full statement released by the ITF highlighting their complete findings rather than the edited version released on December 22. However, his first objective is to forget his problems and enjoy a successful beginning to the 1999 season.

"Winning the 1998 Australian Open was a dream come true, and of course anything is possible. I haven't lost the touch and I haven't lost the feel. My goal is to enjoy the tennis and if I enjoy it then I can always get some tremendous results. I wanted to get to No 1 last year and I got very close.

"The players that I most admired from back home were Ivan Lendl and Martina Navratilova, and they were playing their best tennis when they were between the age of 26 and 30. I'm still in that age group."

PATRICK HERTZOG


Korda believes he can put the controversy behind him and rediscover the form that brought him two titles last year

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CRICKET

Tshwete renews attack on selectors

By Our Sports Staff

INSTEAD of dancing in the streets, South Africa's triumph over West Indies has provoked a political row. Steve Tshwete, the Sports Minister, criticised the national selectors after South Africa had completed their third successive Test victory over the once-mighty touring team on Tuesday, clinching the series.

Tshwete said the selectors had not picked enough black cricketers for the fourth Test which starts at the Newlands ground in Cape Town tomorrow. "The series was already in the bag — this was a good opportunity to let a talented youngster have a chance to play," he said. Tshwete claimed that the repeated exclusion of black players from the national side was denying them the chance to improve skills and gain experience.

Ali Bacher, the managing director of the United Cricket Board, said that he was disappointed by Tshwete's comments. He planned to challenge the minister yesterday when the pair attended a black cricket tournament in the Eastern Cape town of Fort Beaufort. "The politicians must have confidence in us," Bacher said.

For Bacher and his fellow cricket administrators, recent criticism has come as a shock. Previously, cricket was hailed as a model sport because of its commitment to black development. Tshwete himself chaired the talks between rival black and white cricket bodies that led to the formation of the United Cricket Board in 1991.

In the past year, however, four "black" cricketers have represented the country, including fast bowler Makhaya Ntini, the first black African to play Test cricket for South Africa.

India are certain to make changes for the third and final Test against New Zealand, starting tomorrow and their openers are under particular threat. Navjot Sidhu and Ajay Jadeja both failed in the second Test, which India lost by four wickets to go 1-0 down in the series.

Sidhu is one of three players who have not been retained for the five one-day internationals that follow this Test. The other two to go home will be Robin Singh, the pace bowler, and Harbhajan Singh, the off spinner.

MOTOR RACING: BRITISH TEENAGER TIPPED TO COMPETE IN FORMULA ONE WITHIN THREE YEARS

Prolific Button destined to reach top of tree

By Kevin Eason

IT IS a label that has tarred many a young driver on his struggle through the ranks to the golden prize of Formula One. But to many experts in motorsport, whose world is geared to finding the next great talent to rank alongside Ayrton Senna, there simply is no doubt about the quality of Jenson Button.

Anyone who has worked with him or watched his flashing talent on the track is convinced that Britain has produced the young man who will lead the next generation of Formula One drivers. Button, 18, is saddled with the onerous task of following a line of British Formula One world champions, that started with Mike Hawthorn and ended with Damon Hill in 1996.

He is unlikely to have to wait long for his chance, for a test in a McLaren is now looming after Button was named this year's McLaren Autosport British Racing Drivers' Club Young Driver.

Ron Dennis, McLaren's team principal, is convinced that Button is on his way to Formula One, perhaps within three years. Dennis said: "All the ingredients are there with Jenson. It is up to him. Three years is an ambitious schedule but it is achievable. We are aware of Jenson's ability and we have spoken to him already about his future."

Button has fired his way to the top with an astonishing record of success in karting, and the Formula Ford title this year at his first attempt. After becoming the youngest Super A Kart Champion of Europe, Paul Lemmons, his GKS Tecno team manager, said: "In my 25 years in karting, there have been only two drivers of such outstanding ability: one was Ayrton Senna, the other Jenson Button."

Button, from a village just outside Bath, starts next year with £50,000 worth of prize-money in his sponsorship pocket to fund a campaign in Formula Three, traditionally the conveyor belt to Formula One.

His new bosses at the Renault-backed Promatecme team were handed convincing evidence of his potential in his first test, his first drive in an Formula Three car. Within ten laps, he was half a second off the lap record at the French Magny-Cours grand prix circuit.

While Button was convincing in France, Justin Wilson was stunning in Italy on his first outing in a Formula 3000 car. Wilson has found the progression tougher than Button, relying on his father, Keith, a garage owner, to finance his career through karts and Formula Vauxhall, where he was with Paul Stewart Racing.

The struggle is relative, though: Wilson is still only 20 and this year achieved his breakthrough by winning the inaugural Formula Palmer Audi championship, his prize for victory being a season in Formula 3000. "It is very difficult because there is so much competition at every level and from so many countries now," Wilson, from Sheffield, said. "Finding the money is always difficult and, if it hadn't been for Palmer Audi, I would not have made it into F3000. It is my chance to impress."


Button: astonishing record

Neither Peter Dumbreck nor Jonny Kane could find the money to keep them in Britain. In Dumbreck's case, a move to Japan has brought the success and exposure he yearned for. The Scot, 25, won the Japan Formula Three championship and topped off his season with victory in the prestigious Macau Grand Prix. Executives at Mercedes were quickly on the telephone for his services.

Kane, 25, from Northern Ireland, is off to America after running out of money and hope at home. The former British Formula Three champion has secured a seat in the US PPG Dayton Indy Lights series with Team Kool Green, which runs Dario Franchitti, of Scotland, in the rival CART championship.

FOOTBALL

Clock starts ticking in race to 2006 World Cup

By Rob Hughes

WHEN Big Ben chimed midnight, the deadline for bids to stage the 2006. World Cup closed with the expected seven candidates officially declared. "From here on," Danny Jordaan, the former footballer and human rights leader who heads South Africa's application, said, "every candidate shares one fear, the fear of losing."

Jordaan has six months, but certainly not until March 2000 when the 24-man executive committee of Fifa, world football's governing body, vote on the issue, to make maximum use of the Mandela appeal. They are united, the football man and the President, who used sport to create the rainbow image of South Africa liberated from apartheid, in believing that Africa has a compelling case: but in 1999 Mandela hands over the presidency and the emotional value of his presence will begin to ebb away.

THE CONTENDERS

England
Brazil
Germany
Morocco
Egypt
Ghana
South Africa

That will, to some extent, level the playing field for England and other contenders. It should come down to a basic calculation of the quality of each country's infrastructure and ability to organise a 64-match tournament — a quality that England has in depth. However, those who know Fifa politics must still be aware that South Africa has influence where it counts, inside the committee, and that Germany has the strength of insiders in most meaningful football structures, strength that England has failed to maintain.

Alec McGivan, director of England's 2006 campaign, finished 1998 as he began it, attacking Germany's comparative lack of government support. There is a misconception here; the German government blessed the bid in 1993 and, while it was unlikely to give priority to spending towards a future World Cup during a general-election year fought against widespread post-war unemployment, the new government has since announced immense commitment to stadiums in Berlin and Leipzig. Moreover, the Fifa voters will feel the warmth of Deutsche Fussball-Bund (DfB) hospitality early in the year that matters, for January 2000 is the centenary of German football, and March 2000 is the month that the executive members decide. There will be a huge show in Leipzig, the birthplace of the DfB. Meanwhile, Germany prefers to ring out the old year in a practical manner, making December 31 the date on which its 20 aspirant World Cup cities give evidence of progress in preparing stadiums to meet Fifa demands.

Franz Beckenbauer, seldom reluctant to remind Fifa members that Germany stuck to the gentleman's agreement that England broke — namely that the DfB supported Euro 96 in England, in return for which Sir Bert Millichip, the then Football Association chairman, pledged support for Germany 2006 — has questioned South Africa's scope to put on a safe, competent World Cup. But Beckenbauer hears, as other insiders do, that Brazil has powerful backing.

The Brazilian bid is there in writing, despite the fact that Riccardo Teixeira, its football president, son-in-law of João Havelange, the recently-retired Fifa president, neglected to inform the government in Brasilia that the intention was for real. The dilapidated stadiums in Brazil, and the need for a $41 billion (£24.7 billion) International Monetary Fund loan to the country, suggest that, sooner rather than later, those planning such a costly venture will seek government accord.

Heavy politics, however, can rebound. England hopes that, come voting day, Graham Kelly, Keith Wiseman and the FA millions will be forgotten, but some Fifa executives have long memories. "England assumes government support is its trump card," one member scoffed. "Well, we haven't forgotten Tony Blair and Jack Cunningham accusing us of a 'cosy stitch up to hijack support for Germany'. Maybe they were misled by the FA denials over the gentleman's agreement, or maybe they were just trying to win a different election."



Johnson appears shy but put him on the pitch and the aggressive, confident Antipodean emerges. Photograph: Richard Pohle

Johnson lets feet do the talking

Russell Kempson meets the Watford player trying to shoot down Tottenham

Richard Johnson, the Watford midfield player, is not an archetypal Australian. "G'day, mate" and "No worries" do not feature in his vocabulary and he doesn't mention, let alone gloat over, the pre-Melbourne humiliation of the England cricket team.

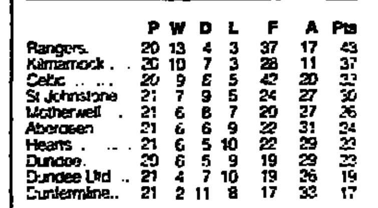
He might have a mother called Shelagh but he appears quiet, almost shy — the antithesis of the loud, tinnie-guzzling Antipodean of dubious descent so loved by whingeing Poms the world over.

Johnson, 24, speaks softly, his voice magnified only by the echo in dressing-room No 1 at the club's training ground in Stanmore, Middlesex. He is courteous, attentive and admits only one concession to brashness — the black BMW Z3 Roadster parked outside. It has caused him grief from envious team-mates but the jealous jibes have long since subsided.

"I got my first decent contract in March so I went out and treated myself," he said. "I've waited a long time for a nice car. It goes well and although I got a lot of stick from the lads who thought I was bit flash, it didn't really bother me. It's a great car."

Appearances are often deceptive. Put Johnson on a football pitch and the real Aussie emerges — the confident, aggressive competitor who played rugby league at school with Andrew and Matthew Johns, the Australia internationals. He received his fifth booking of the season in the 1-1 draw against Norwich City on Tuesday and will shortly take a one-match break at the Football Association's pleasure.

Yet woe betide any defenders who stand off, allowing him the merest sight of goal from any range or angle. One of his four goals this season was described as "a 35-yard right-footed screamer"; another as "a thundering drive from 20 yards". Another was "hammered home from 20 yards". Johnson laughs, perplexed and almost embarrassed at his ballistic expertise.



"I've had a few of those," he said. "I used to score a lot of goals from distance in Australia. Left foot, right foot, but usually the right. I don't really know why but I seem to have the knack." Scoring with a two-yard tap-in is a recurring dream, rarely fulfilled.

Tottenham Hotspur will testify to his aim. On Jürgen Klinsmann's debut, in a pre-season friendly at Vicarage Road in 1994, Johnson scored with a 35-yard special in the 1-1 draw. Those at White Hart Lane who recall its velocity will be wise to advise George Graham, the Tottenham manager, before Watford travel to North London in the FA Cup third round tomorrow.

It is a trip that will revive many memories for Johnson, who arrived in England as a wide-eyed teenager eight years ago. He spent three months on trial with Tottenham but was deemed surplus to requirements. "I thought I'd done really well but they told me I wasn't any better than what they had there already," he said. "As it's turned out, I was probably better off leaving."

Football is in the Johnson blood. His father, Roy, and mother lived in Preston before emigrating in 1968. Johnson Sr was an apprentice with Preston North End until he moved Down Under after answering an advertisement for players to help form a new league. He started with Sydney Croatia but settled in northern New South Wales on the country's east coast.

Johnson Jr grew up in Kurri Kurri, a town amid the coalfields around Newcastle, in which his father worked, and the vineyards of Hunter Valley. Sport dominated his curriculum at St Peter's Boys' School: he played in the state under-21 league when he was 15 but his education suffered. "I was useless," he said. "It was not for me.

"I wasn't doing any good at school. Dad sat me down one day and said: 'If you want to make anything of yourself in football, England is the best place to be.' So I just packed my bags and got on the plane. If I'd really thought about what I was doing, I'd probably have had second thoughts. I'm glad I didn't."

A dual national, with English and Australian passports, Johnson will become further anglicised when he marries Vanessa Martin — "a lovely Essex girl from Southend" — in June 2000. Yet he is still miffed that he played no part in Australia's World Cup qualifying campaign, ultimately fruitless though it was.

He was watched by scouts of Terry Venables, the then Australia coach, but the call never arrived. This was possibly a consequence of the apparent antipathy between Venables and Graham Taylor, the Watford and former England manager. "I don't know if that had anything to do with it," he said. "I hope not. It was disappointing because I'd been playing really well."

Johnson has not given up hope of international recognition and even if Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, were to call first, he would consider the offer. It might not please the boys back in Kurri Kurri but Hoddle would receive a warm response. No worries.

Old Firm remain Nevin's title spur

By Phil Gordon

WHEN Pat Nevin left Kilmarnock for Motherwell three months ago, there were plenty of people prepared to tell him he was taking a step down. The upwardly-mobile Motherwell player-chief executive might use this afternoon to argue that both clubs are going in the same direction.

Nevin was drawn to Fir Park by his ambitions for the club, as much as his personal one. Yet, the man dubbed the game's first punk footballer is enough of a romantic to hope that his former and present teams are laying foundations for a genuine challenge to the Old Firm.

It is appropriate that the first football of 1999 should be at Fir Park between these clubs, because both symbolise the brave new era that is being nourished by the Scottish Premier League (SPL). Both are benefiting from the £44 million of Sky Television money that is dripping down through the SPL to smaller clubs to help them catch up on Celtic and Rangers, and both have contributed to the 11 per cent increase in attendances reported by the SPL.

PREMIER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	20	13	4	3	37	17	43
Kilmarnock	20	10	7	3	28	11	37
Celtic	20	9	6	5	42	20	33
St Johnstone	21	7	9	5	24	27	30
Motherwell	21	6	8	7	20	27	26
Aberdeen	21	6	6	9	22	31	24
Hearts	21	6	5	10	22	29	23
Dundee	20	6	5	9	19	29	23
Dundee Utd	21	4	7	10	19	26	19
Dunfermline	21	2	11	8	17	33	17

Kilmarnock, in second place, may possess the points that Motherwell crave, but Nevin believes that Motherwell's people power will soon be a source of envy.

"We're attracting thousands of fans back to Fir Park through the price reduction policy implemented by our chairman, John Boyle," he said. "The most heartening aspect of that has been the kids who are coming. If we can catch them at a young age and get them to support us, rather than Celtic or Rangers, then this club has a chance of growing. Kilmarnock copied our move and got 14,000 people two weeks ago."

Motherwell underlined their ambition by yesterday signing Lee McCulloch on a new three-year contract. The Scotland Under-21 forward scored the equaliser at Aberdeen on Tuesday night that helped Motherwell into fifth place.

Kilmarnock know that victory is essential. Closing the gap on Rangers to three points just 48 hours before the Old Firm do battle would send out a signal that they do not intend to give Dick Advocaat's team an easy passage.

Beardsley comes home to Hartlepool

By George Caulkin

WHEN Peter Beardsley embarked on his career as a professional footballer two decades ago, the Berlin Wall was intact, Margaret Thatcher held the keys to 10 Downing Street and the Soviet Union had not yet been consigned to the history books. By signing for his tenth club yesterday, the former England international could reasonably claim to have aged better than most.

The same cannot be said of his latest port of call, however. When Beardsley scored a hat-trick on his debut for Carlisle United's reserve team in August 1979, Hartlepool United were preparing for another season of mediocrity in the old fourth division and, while the name may have altered, they remain there still. Beardsley's signing — initially until the end of the season — represents a timely coup. After an unhappy spell with Bolton Wanderers and a brief reunion with Kevin Keegan at Fulham, it also returns the forward to his native North East, a significant lure given that his family have remained in the region since his second transfer from Newcastle United for £450,000 last year. "It's great to be back," he said yesterday.

TRANSFER TRAIL

Aug 1979: Joins Carlisle Utd (free) from Wallsend Boys Club.
April 1982: Joins Vancouver Whitecaps for £275,000
Sept 1982: Joins Manchester United for £300,000
March 1983: Returns to Vancouver on a free transfer
Sept 1983: Joins Newcastle for £150,000
July 1987: Joins Liverpool for £1.9m
Aug 1991: Joins Everton for £1m
June 1993: Rejoins Newcastle for £1.4m
Aug 1997: Joins Bolton for £450,000
Feb 1998: Joins Manchester City on loan
March 1998: Joins Fulham on loan
Dec 1998: Joins Hartlepool, having been released by Bolton and Fulham

With Hartlepool down to twenty-first in the table after five consecutive defeats, Beardsley's arrival immediately prompted fevered speculation as to the long-term future of Mick Tait, the club's present manager. A section of supporters have called for Tait's head in recent weeks, although circumstances conspire to suggest that Beardsley will not be his eventual successor. The pair became friends while playing together at Carlisle and though Beardsley had a chance to return to Brunton Park — he had a series of discussions with Michael Knighton, the Carlisle chairman, three weeks ago and was widely expected to become Nigel Pearson's first signing — it was that personal bond which proved the stronger.

"I was lucky enough to play with the boss at Carlisle and he really looked after me then. This is a way to try to help repay him," Beardsley said. Having made little secret of his desire to enter management he also attempted to deflect the inevitable gossip regarding his position. "As long as Mick is here, I'll be here as a player."



Beardsley: love of football

While nothing formal is enshrined in his contract, there will also be a brief to encourage Hartlepool's fledgeling players, perhaps in the hope that some of Beardsley's magic will rub off. "The club has put a lot of time and money into developing the youth side and I am looking forward to working with the young players, not only in the first team but also in the reserves and youth team," he said.

Some will suggest that scrabbling about at the foot of the League is an undignified resting place for a man who has won 59 international caps, captained his country and won a host of trophies with Liverpool, as well as finding time to play for Everton, Newcastle, Manchester United and Manchester City via Vancouver Whitecaps and Wallsend Boys' Club. Why humiliate himself, they will ask?

The answer will be provided by a packed St James' Park later this month when Newcastle entertain Celtic for Beardsley's testimonial game and by the few hundred extra souls present for the visit of Cambridge United to Victoria Park tomorrow. All would mention qualities such as exuberance, enthusiasm and a love of football. This, after all, is man who still talks of "doing better", as a player. "I've got a few years to go yet," Beardsley, who celebrates his 38th birthday later this month, said.

Altrincham's management team preaching caution

Non-League Football
By Walter Gammie

IN THE best traditions of cautious-minded football folk, Bernard Taylor and Graham Heathcote are approaching the new year without making any extravagant predictions for Altrincham. The temptation must have been strong because their side has swept to the top of the UniBond League with 12 victories and two draws in their past 15 matches.

"We've still got the hard part to come," Taylor, the manager, said. "There is still half the season to go. We've got to the top of the table, now we've got to stay there. Any of the teams in the top five could win the league. They are all good enough. Guiseley, who we play tomorrow, have games in hand in fifth place. It's a very important match."

Yet the 3-0 win at Runcorn on Boxing Day and the 4-1 win at Moss Lane over Marine — watched by a hearteningly large crowd of 1,001 — spoke volumes for the confidence of the team. Phil Power, fully fit and firing, scored in both matches and Leroy Chambers scored his eleventh league goal at Runcorn.

Most remarkably, Stuart Coburn, the goalkeeper, scored with a wind-assisted kick down the hill at Canal Street. The ball bounced once and over a helpless Mark Morris in the Runcorn goal. Coburn also saved a penalty, and his form has played a prominent role in the Altrincham revival.

Coburn's presence saw Andy Dibble depart on loan to Barry Town, the League of Wales champions, where he fell victim to an extraordinary injury — suffering severe burns, apparently from lime on the penalty spot, at Carmarthen Town. "We visited him in hospital," Taylor said. "He's in good spirits, but he's had a skin graft to his chest, and it may be a long time before he plays again."

Dibble's misfortune aside, things appear much brighter for a club that gleaned only four points from its first eight matches. With a ground equipped for the Football League, Altrincham had not hidden their ambition of regaining the Football Conference place lost two seasons ago — but the time spent by Nigel Gleghorn and Brian Kilcline as player-coaches failed to have the desired effect.

The upturn in Altrincham's fortunes coincided with Heathcote taking over the coaching duties at a club with which he has been involved since 1970. "The spirit in the dressing-room is as good as I have known," he said. "It helps when you're winning — but the job is only half done."

ICE HOCKEY

Devils are stung by busier Bees

By Norman de Mesquita

CARDIFF DEVILS once again missed out on an opportunity yesterday to maintain their challenge for the Sekonda Superleague, beaten 4-0 by Bracknell Bees in their second successive home defeat.

Two goals apiece from Chris Brant and Paxton Schulte did the job for Bracknell and Richard Gallace, on loan from Slough Jets because of injury to Bracknell's two regular goaltenders, did much to deny Cardiff.

Bracknell were faster, stronger, more determined and better at all the basic skills than the Devils, who gave what must have been one of their worst performances of the season.

Brant's first goal came after four minutes when he showed sufficient determination to pick up his own rebound and lift it over Derek Herlofsky. Less than four minutes later Schulte completed a neat three-way play with Jeff Johnstone and Dale Junkin to make it 2-0.

The only goal of the second period came when Bracknell were on power play and Brant's shot from the blue line was deflected by Schulte.

The Cardiff power play once again showed its ineptitude and failed to score on any of their six-man advantage opportunities. The nearest they came was when Doug McEwen missed an open net when the Devils were on their first power play in the first period and, early in the third, when Steve Thornton shot wide of an open net.



GARETH EVERETT

McCosh, of Bracknell Bees, finds himself rendered airborne by the loose stick of Menard, of Cardiff Devils. But it was the Devils who ultimately landed with a bump

A breakaway early in the third period saw Brant complete the scoring for the evening and the only disappointing aspect from Bracknell's point of view came with less than five minutes remaining when Norm Bezainde objected to a slashing penalty, which was more than justified, by throwing his stick at the referee, for which he received a misconduct penalty and took no further part in proceedings. Bracknell move up into fourth place.

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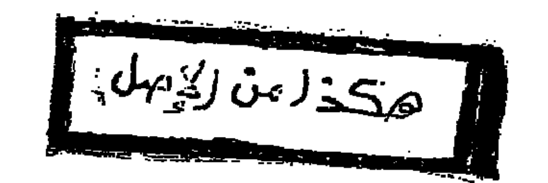
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CHANGING TIMES



RUGBY UNION

Shake-out vital for game's financial health

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

A *CERTAIN* grim reality is already beginning to inform rugby union. From the first day of professionalism it was a player's market but, come this season's end, players should be in no doubt that employers will begin to pick and choose. The process has already begun at Sale where, yesterday, John Devereux was placed on the transfer list.

Devereux, the former Wales and British Isles centre who joined Sale after ending his rugby league career at Widnes in 1996, is on the list for different reasons to Tom Beim, his club colleague. Beim seeks a move for personal reasons; Devereux, 32, who has started only 21 games, has been afflicted by a succession of injuries and John Mitchell, the director of rugby, said: "We can't carry non-productive or non-performing players."

A harsh wind of change is what rugby needs. There are too many players earning too much money for skills that are too limited; there are too many clubs living beyond their means and it should not take, say, a salary cap imposed from outside — if, indeed, that is legally possible — to force wages down to an affordable level.

"Those who set the crazy money-roundabout twirling are realising now that the game has a value better-balanced than it was 18 months ago," Ian McGeechan, the Northampton director of rugby, said. "There is greater realism. Professional squads will probably get smaller. Top players will still earn good money but a lot more of them will be on realistic salaries, and that will be good."

Northampton's pruning knife has already been out. Last summer McGeechan trimmed 19 players in the interests of economy. "We want to evolve now from within," he said, "although there may be the one-off introduction of a player for a specific purpose."

Such clubs as Northampton and London Irish, so busy in the marketplace earlier this season, will be in no hurry to go shopping again. At Sale, however, Mitchell knows he must improve his pack and will balance his books by discarding some assets so that he can afford others.

"I have been assured the money will be available for the right people," Mitchell said. "I do feel a responsibility to produce good, England-qualified players but if you want to keep up with the Joneses, sometimes you have to shelve that concept. This is no longer an English league, it's a cosmopolitan league."



Mitchell: balancing act

Mitchell could be looking north of the Border where uncertainty continues to surround the future of the two super clubs in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Nick Oswald, chief executive of Edinburgh Reivers, acknowledged that several of his players (some of whose contracts expire in June) have been approached by clubs outside Scotland.

"The review body looking into Scottish rugby is not likely to have any findings until May and if they say that clubs are the way forward in Europe, then I don't think there would be enough time for them to prepare for a higher level of rugby," Oswald said. "We need a decision fairly soon to start planning for next year and the players need to know what the future holds for them."

The future, for Dean Ryan, could be in the West Country after reports linking the Newcastle No 8 with Bristol. Ryan, so integral a part of Newcastle's Allied Dunbar Premiership-winning side last season, is unlikely to play again this season because of a neck injury and, at 32, is planning a career in coaching. Bristol have lost David Egerton, their forwards coach, to work and family commitments and have acknowledged negotiations with Newcastle.

Shepherd suffers World Cup blow

BY ALASDAIR REID

ROWEN SHEPHERD'S prospects of representing Scotland in this year's World Cup were dealt a blow yesterday when a knee injury he sustained in a practice match earlier this week was diagnosed as a ruptured anterior cruciate ligament. Initial estimates suggested he would be out of rugby for at least eight months.

The injury occurred when Shepherd was tackled after collecting a high ball during Glasgow Caledonians' match against a Scottish Districts Under-21 team on Monday. After receiving on-field treatment, he continued playing but subsequent investigations have revealed the full extent of the damage.

Shepherd, who has made 20 international appearances for Scotland at centre and full back, was dropped by Scotland before their last international against South Africa in November, but was still considered a core member of the squad. While guilty of inconsistency in the past, the 28-year-old has nevertheless been a reliable goalkicker, amassing more than 100 points for his country.

He could be fit again in time for the World Cup in October, but the selectors might be reluctant to call on a player who would by then be extremely short of international match practice, having missed the Five Nations Championship and the warm-up tour to South Africa.

"This is devastating for him and a big blow for us," Keith Robertson, the Glasgow Caledonians coach, said. The heartening news for Robertson yesterday was that Stewart Campbell, the Scotland lock, has been passed fit.

GLASGOW CALEDONIANS: T Hayes; D Stark, I Jardine, J Leslie, S Longstaff; L Smith, F Stott; G McIlwham, G Bulloch, W Anderson, S Grimes, S Campbell, G Flockhart, J Shaw, M Waite. Replacements: G Patterson, J Craig, C Simmers, K McKenzie, A Kittle, G Simpson, J Petrie.

Versatile Sailor warms to task

Christopher Irvine meets one of the hottest properties that either code of rugby can boast



Sailor has enjoyed his stay in Britain and would like to return in the future. Photograph: Andrew Varley

On a shivery morning before training in Leeds, a weather report from home was the last thing that Wendell Sailor wanted to hear. Jamie Mathiou, just back from Brisbane, was complaining about the heat there. "How are you going, mate?" he asked of his Australian compatriot. Sailor could have happily strangled Mathiou, but, instead, breathed into both hands and stamped his feet. "Jeez, it's cold," he said.

Mention Rotherham to the Brisbane Broncos and Australia rugby league wing and all 6ft 3in and 16st of him quiver. With sleet driving into his face, fingertips numb and the crowd on his back, a 3½-month winter sojourn in the alien environment of the second division of English rugby union felt more like purgatory than the fun idea when he rolled up at Headingley in October.

"That was the first time I'd played in really cold weather," Sailor, 24, said. "Mentally, I didn't want to play, which I'd never experienced before. I remember making just three tackles all game. Then I tried to kick. Someone shouted, 'That's bloody ordinary, Sailor', and it was."

As well as keeping an eye on the weather, the next few days will put more pressure on Sailor to perform at his best in both codes. Today, he will be playing rugby league for Leeds Rhinos against Castleford Tigers in a Tetley's Challenge match. Two days later, it is a case of "if it's Sunday it must be rugby union" and a testing trip to Coventry with Leeds Tykes in the Allied Dunbar Premiership.

So why has a player with glamour appeal and the trappings of success in Australia risked his reputation in such an experiment?

"Union was always a challenge for me, an itch to scratch," he explained. "I was confident enough to say I could play it. Then I had to go and do it. The second division here has been a great introduction. Next year I'd love to do have a go in the first division. What I didn't appreciate about union is that you don't just pick it up. It's far more technical. You need a greater awareness of where your other players are. Recycling the ball is the biggest single difference."

Wasps have been linked with a similar short-term deal for Sailor next season. His agent will be sounding out several clubs this month, although broadening his horizons to union has taught him one thing, that as much as he is enjoying wrestling with the demands of another sport, it is league where his permanent future resides.

His geniality gave way to serious contemplation for a moment. "I'm a league man through and through," he said. "I set myself a goal of 20 Tests for Australia. I'm nearly halfway there. We've got the new tri-nations in 1999 and the 2000 World Cup. Those are massively important to me. Afterwards, England could be a longer-term possibility."

Wigan Warriors were prepared to make him the richest player in the game in a deal starting this year. He initially leapt at the chance, without appreciating a two-year option on him, that Brisbane enforced. Wigan claimed they had a binding agreement with Sailor, who admitted he was bowled over by a £500,000 offer and briefly lost sight of his loyalty to Brisbane, who gave him his opportunity when no other club was interested.

It was during the 1994 Australia tour that British spectators first got glimpses of a powerful young tyro with wings for boots. Halifax made him an immediate offer and he was close to signing for London Broncos three years ago when Brisbane again stepped in. In another two years, he will be free to explore his desire for a spell in the British game. Leeds, where he is at home with the set-up and surroundings, will be an obvious choice for him when the time comes.

By circumventing the block by the Rugby Football Union on Sailor's work permit by playing him as an amateur, the Tykes were docked four points. It was a price worth paying. With Sailor on board, Leeds have not lost in the league and their average crowds of 700 have trebled. He has scored ten tries, five of them in one game against Rugby.

As good as it was to be paid again, the disappointment of not scoring and giving away a try on his return to league against Halifax Blue Sox on Boxing Day is more of an incentive for the match against Castleford today.

"I was trying so hard against Halifax that I was thinking of a gap opening up and a spectacular 80-metre try when I tried to trap the ball, missed it and they scored," he said. "When people hear that you're the best this and best that, of course they want something special. If they don't see it, they inevitably question whether you are that good."

For Sailor, his venture, which ends in four weeks, is all about questioning himself. The answers have been occasionally memorable, despite the weather.

It is time to keep to the rule of law

Referees have the authority to stem the tide of growing dissatisfaction within the game, **Gerald Davies** *argues*

As the year turns and the new millennium beckons, 1999 ought to prove the time when rugby union and its various strata of governing authorities will inspire faith and *devotion once more* from their long-suffering supporters, among whom, it may be said, complacency — indeed indifference — may be setting in. These characteristics of loyalty are being lost and there should be no doubt about the gravity of this.

There are dark signs but this loyalty can no longer be counted upon. If club rugby in Wales leaves much to be desired, there is at least loyalty shown when the national team plays. But what is happening in Scotland should be a matter of deep regret. To witness Scotland play in front of a considerably less than full *Murrayfield* for international matches recently was a deeply melancholy sight. There may be many reasons for this wholesale absence. Whatever they may be, and however diverse the reasons are, the conclusion must be that the Scots are a discerning crowd: they know what they want to see and will not desert their hearth simply for the sake of any old game, especially if the team they support has lapsed somewhat of late.

If there is unrest about the continuing lack of harmony within the administration of rugby there is growing dissatisfaction, too, about the manner in which the game is played on the field and the uncertainty about whose laws to obey. The laws are a perennial problem that is unlikely to go away unless there are dramatic changes. In which case if they are, the character of rugby union would cease. Already there is an undercurrent of surreptitious and subtle change.

We begin with the old chestnut of putting the ball into the scrum. Quite how referees can keep a straight face as they blatantly ignore the law as it is written, and allow the scrum half to put the ball in crooked and under his own hooker's feet, remains a mystery. And how they can then spare themselves a giggle when occasionally, curiously and obscurely, they reverse this trend, arbitrarily it seems, to abide by the law and penalise a team for transgressing it. How do they come by their decisions?

And how is it that the very stern referee's assessor, appointed by his union to observe and make copious notes of these contradictions, can judge the quality of this kind of refereeing? What advice does he give? What recommendations does he make? And what, frankly, is the spectator meant to make of all this? How serious is this contest? How honest is rugby as a professional sport?

If the scrum is no longer a contest then the lineout is also fast following a similar pattern. Increasingly, referees are falling into the habit of giving a more lenient interpretation so as to allow the ball to be thrown in crooked and in favour of one team. This is predictable and changes the essence of what is meant to be a competitive challenge. Thus, it takes away the element of surprise from the contest and of the opposition's tactical response. It also contravenes the law.

But the hooker is allowed — also contrary to the law — to take a step infield to throw the ball into the lineout. It may of itself be a small point but indicative nonetheless of the trend to "loosen" the game.

To award penalty tries is well within the referee's prerogative, of course. But it should be as a last resort for a serious breach of the laws. At no stage since the law was introduced has the referee exercised this prerogative with such ease and alacrity as he does nowadays. This effectively means it is within the official's gift to award seven points, more than the worth of two penalty goals, for a transgression which, in the case of a collapsed scrum, say, may be caused innocently by unsteady footing. Or, indeed, that the true culprit is not properly identified and escapes punishment.

All this is for the purpose of moving the game along in an attempt to make rugby more accessible. The game has appealed almost wholly to those who have played it at some stage or another or grew acquainted with its esoteric niceties at school. Rugby is hard-pressed to find a new audience.

The faithful crowd may perceive a game that is changing rapidly from the one which they grew up to understand and to cherish. And who is to say that they may not be quite so enamoured of a game whose standards, which they were expected to uphold, are now being compromised and whose principles are gradually being eroded. By cynically abusing long-held values, rugby may be in danger of losing its hardcore followers. In chasing wider popularity, rugby would seem to be willing to sacrifice its integrity.

Something new is being created, no doubt, but the old enthusiasms and certainties are no longer around and, to be truthful, no one any longer can feel sure who the guardians of the game really are; nor confident of the kind of game they are attempting to create.

To ignore the laws as they are written, to give referees more latitude, and for the crowd complacently to accept decisions and behaviour that they only half understand changes rugby's perspective. There is, indeed, something superficial sometimes about rugby providing a true contest.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Mitsubishi make solid start

■ **MOTOR RALLYING:** Mitsubishi, winners of the past two Dakar Rallies, confirmed that they were favourites to make it three in a row when Kenjiro Shinozuka, of Japan, won the race prologue yesterday. Shinozuka triumphed in 5min 11sec from Jean-Louis Schlesser, of France, in a Schlesser-Renault Mégane.

■ **FOOTBALL: John Collins, the Everton midfield player, is to have an operation on a toe injury next week that may rule him out of action for two months. But he could still play a part in the FA Cup tie with Bristol City tomorrow.**

■ **SQUASH:** Sue Wright, Cassie Jackman and Suzanne Horner, of England, are third, fourth and fifth in the new world rankings.

HOCKEY

Reading limber up for European tests

BY SYDNEY FRISKIN

READING have a chance to tune up for their entry into Europe next month at the two-day DTZ Midlands indoor international tournament this weekend.

This popular event has unfortunately lost much of its international flavour by the withdrawal of the entire Scottish contingent, Murray International Metals, the holders, Capercaillies (the Scotland national side) and Menzieshill, from Dundee. The dates allocated to the tournament were apparently too close to the new year. Some of England's indoor stalwarts, Old Loughtonians, East Grinstead and Doncaster, also declined for the same reason.

However, Reading will still face strong opposition from Vikings, of Denmark, winners in 1995, and other previous winners, Stourport, Harborne and Barford Tigers. Leek, another Midlands club, stepped in at short notice after Menzieshill had withdrawn. Under the guidance of Imran Sherwani, they won their pool in the Midlands club championship last month and hope to make further progress when the event is resumed.

Reading's commitment in *Europe is in the B division of* the indoor club championship in Prague from February 19 to 21. Their team for this weekend includes Ken Robinson, of New Zealand, who joined recently, and other familiar faces from the outdoor squad.

DRAW: Pool A: Barford Tigers, Olton and West Warwickshire, Firebrands, Brooklands. Pool B: Vikings, Harborne, Beeston, Nottingham Hall. Pool C: Combined Services, Stourport, Leek, Swansea. Pool D: Dunton Engineering, Hull, Reading, Kidderminster.

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

UNI-BALL TROPHY: Group A: Leicester Riders 93 Derby Storm 90 (OT).

BOWLS

BLACKPOOL: Boddingtons Newton Hall International Classic: Quarter-finals: K Hawes (Eng) bt C Johnson (Blackpool) 21-14; A Melrose (Scot) bt J Shaw (Wiltshire) 21-14; D Hunt (Eng) bt D Ward (Blackpool) 21-12; B Rawcliffe (Blackpool) bt S McLeish (Scot) 21-11. Semi-finals: Melrose bt Hawes 20-17. Rawcliffe bt Hunt 21-14. Final: Rawcliffe bt Melrose 21-10

DARTS

PURFLEET: Skol world championship: Second round (England unless stated): S Burgess bt R Harrington 3-1, J Ferrell bt G Mawson (Can) 3-2; B Anderson bt J Harvey (Scot) 3-2; P Taylor bt J Lowe 3-1.

FOOTBALL

Wednesday's late results

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE: Dundee United 1 Rangers 2; Heart of Midlothian 1 Dundee 2.

SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE: Premier division: Ballymena 1 Crusaders 2; Portadown 1 Coleraine 2. First division: Ards 1 Larne 0; Ballyclare 0 Distillery 1, Carrick 2 Limavady 3.

FAI HARP CUP: Final, second leg: Cork 1 Shamrock Rovers 0 (Cork win 2-1 on agg).

PONTIN'S LEAGUE CUP: Group one: Hartlepool 0 Middlesbrough 4

ICE HOCKEY

SEKONDA SUPERLEAGUE: Manchester Storm 1 Newcastle Riverkings 0; Cardiff Devils 0 Bracknell Bees 4

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Buffalo 2 Ottawa 3 (OT); Carolina 4 Tampa Bay 3; Washington 2 New Jersey 3; Pittsburgh 7 Florida 4; Toronto 4 Anaheim 1; Nashville 2 Boston 5; Phoenix 3 New York Rangers 1; Los Angeles 5 San Jose 1.

MOTOR RALLYING

GRANADA, Spain: Dakar Rally: Prologue (20km and 5km timed section): Cars: 1, K Shinozuka (Japan, Mitsubishi) 5min 11sec; 2, J-L Schlesser (Fr, Schlesser) at 4sec; 3, J-P Fontenay (Fr, Mitsubishi) same time; 4, M Prieto (Sp, Mitsubishi) 5; 5, J M Servia (Sp, Schlesser) 6; 6, H Masuoka (Japan, Mitsubishi) 16; 7, J Kleinschmidt (Ger, Mitsubishi) 18. Motorbikes: 1, D von Zitzewitz (Ger, KTM) 4min 34sec; 2, J Roma (Sp, KTM) at 7sec; 3, J Fink (Austria, KTM) 13; 4, G Sala (It, KTM) 19; 5, F Fasola (It, KTM) 20; 6, F Flick (Fr, Honda) 22; 7, O Gallardo (Sp, BMW) 23

SAILING

SYDNEY-HOBART RACE: Line honours: 1. Sayonara (US) 2 days 20hr 3min; 2. Brindabella (Aus) 2 22:55; 3. Ausmaid (Aus) 3 07:02; 4. Ragamuffin (Aus) 3 07:11; 5. Nokia (Cook Islands) 3 10:19; 6. Fudge (Aus) 3 12:00; 7. Quest (Aus) 3 15:41; 8. Industrial Quest (Aus) 3 15:58; 9. Aspect Computing (Aus) 3 16:28; 10. AFR Midnight Rambler (Aus) 3 17:04.

CLIPPER ROUND-THE-WORLD RACE: Leg 2d (Galapagos to Hawaii, with miles to finish): 1. Serica (R Dean) 3,757; 2. Thermopylae (M Tod) 3,766; 3. Memerus (B Sollars) 3,785; 4. Taeping (N Fleming) 3,789; 5. Chrysolite (T Hedges) 3,800; equal 6, Antiope (K Harris) and Ariel (A Thomson) 3,806. Overall positions (after leg 2c): 1, Ariel 6.5pts; 2, Memerus 17; 3, Antiope 18; 4, Chrysolite 18.5; 5, Thermopylae 18.5; 6, Taeping 20.5; 7, Serica 25

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

Scottish Premier League

Motherwell v Kilmarnock

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Atherstone v Bromsgrove; Boston v Cambridge City; Crawley v Hastings; Dorchester v Weymouth; Gresley v Burton Albion; Halesowen v Nuneaton; Merthyr v Bath City; Rothwell v Grantham; Salisbury v Gloucester; Worcester City v Tamworth. Southern division: Baldock v Fisher; Bashley v Andover; Chelmsford v Raunds T; Corby v Cirencester Town; Dartford v Margate; Fleet T v Newport IoW; Folkestone Invicta v Tonbridge Angels; Sittingbourne v Ashford; St Leonards v Erith and Belvedere; Witney v Brackley Town; Yate v Havant and Waterlooville. Midland division: Bedworth v Stafford; Bilston v Stourbridge; Bloxwich Town v Hinckley Utd; Clevedon v Redditch; Moor Green v Stakenall; Newport AFC v Evesham; Paget R v Stamford AFC; RC Warwick v Weston-super-Mare; Solihull Boro v Cinderford; VS Rugby v Sutton Coldfield Town; Wisbech Town v Shepshed D.

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Stalybridge v Hyde. First division: Bradford Pk Ave v Farsley Celtic.

SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE: Premier division: Glentoran v Glenavon; Newry v Linfield.

FAI HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: St Patrick's Ath v Shelbourne (7.35).

RUGBY LEAGUE

Club matches

Huddersfield v Halifax (3.0)

Leeds v Castleford (3.0)

Rochdale v Oldham (3.0)

SNOW REPORTS

SKI CLUB

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Conditions Piste	Conditions Runs to Resort	Conditions Off/p	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
Austria								
Kitzbühel	20	66	Icy	Artificial	Packed	Fair	-4	22/12
Obergurgl	25	140	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	-6	22/12
Soll	25	75	Fair	Icy	Packed	Fair	-3	21/12
St Anton	30	280	Hard	Hard	Packed	Fair	-6	21/12
Canada								
Lake Louise	95	135	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud	-4	31/12
France								
Alpe d'Huez	35	150	Hard	Worn	Varied	Wind	1	24/12
Avoriaz	30	80	Hard	Hard	Packed	Cloud	0	24/12
Chamonix	45	125	Fair	Worn	Varied	Cloud	0	24/12
La Clusaz	25	80	Hard	Open	Packed	Cloud	-1	24/12
La Plagne	40	150	Hard	Worn	Varied	Cloud	-2	24/12
La Tania	10	91	Hard	Artificial	Varied	Cloud	-1	24/12
Les Arcs	27	148	Fair	Worn	Varied	Cloud	3	24/12
Tignes	40	130	Good	Artificial	Packed	Cloud	-3	31/12
Val Thorens	50	120	Fair	Worn	Varied	Wind	-3	25/12
Val d'Isère	35	110	Fair	Worn	Varied	Cloud	-5	31/12
Valmorel	20	90	Good	Hard	Packed	Cloud	2	24/12
Italy								
Cervinia	10	130	Hard	Open	Varied	Cloud	0	28/12
Cortina	5	25	Worn	Artificial	Packed	Cloud	-3	21/12
Livigno	10	65	Fair	Artificial	Crusty	Snow	-2	31/12
M di Campiglio	20	50	Hard	Open	Packed	Cloud	-4	20/12
Norway								
Geilo	60	60	Fair	Open	Packed	Fine	-4	28/12
Switzerland								
Crans Montana	5	220	Fair	Artificial	Varied	Cloud	-1	24/12
Grindelwald	20	80	Hard	Icy	Packed	Fair	3	24/12
Klosters	30	115	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	-4	21/12
Murren	30	100	Fair	Hard	Packed	Sun	4	24/12
St Moritz	10	50	Fair	Closed	Packed	Cloud	-8	21/12
Verbier	15	150	Fair	Worn	Crusty	Cloud	3	24/12
Zermatt	15	100	Fair	Icy	Varied	Fair	-1	21/12
United States								
Aspen	60	99	Good	Open	Packed	Cloud	-6	26/12
Deer Valley	75	85	Good	Open	Packed	Cloud	-3	26/12

http://www.skiclub.co.uk L = lower slopes; U = upper slopes

RACING: JOCKEY PUTS TROUBLES BEHIND HIM

Maguire ends year on winning note

ADRIAN MAGUIRE has endured a traumatic week, but he ended the year on a high note with a superb winning ride on Artic Ground in the Mr & Mrs Tidball Novices' Handicap Hurdle at Warwick yesterday.

Maguire resigned his retainer with David Nicholson's stable two days ago, but he will have no problem in retaining his position among the country's top jockeys.

His popularity has never been more evident, and, having been immediately congratulated by fellow rider, Norman Williamson, as they pulled up, he received a great reception from racegoers on his return to the winner's enclosure.

He did not ride in the following two races but, as he walked out to partner River Bay, who finished second to Cardinal Rule, ridden by Williamson, in the Next Year's The Big One Handicap Chase, he said: "It was nice to get a good reception from the crowd. And it was good to be back among the winners. After all, riding winners is what it is all about."


Webber: long-range double

Artic Ground was struggling down the far side, but Maguire was at his usual determined best and, having pinched a good run on the inside on the home turn, he forced Artic Ground past Supreme Troglodyte approaching the final flight and they went 3½ lengths clear at the line.

Winning trainer Paul Webber was at Fontwell, where he was also successful with John Drumm, but his wife, Fiona, said: "It was great to have Adrian on board. "We had a pretty quiet time until about three weeks ago when the horses suddenly came good."

Nicky Henderson's horses are in cracking form too and Premier Generation gave him his twelfth success in the past 15 days, under Mick Fitzgerald, in the Tiny Tim Novices' Hurdle. Reflecting on the stable's good run, Henderson said: "We're keeping the doctor away and long may it continue. We're not doing anything different, the horses just seem well."

Native Charm made it two out of three this term in the Bob Cratchit Novices' Chase, while Henry Daly moved off the 13-mark for the season when Young Spartacus landed the 49's Christmas Present Handicap Hurdle.

PLUMPTON

THUNDERER
12.50 Greyton. 1.25 Hawaiian Youth. 2.00 Cool Performance. 2.35 Kelly Mac. 3.05 Brook Bee. 3.35 Nessun Doro.

GOING: HEAVY

12.50 DI MARCO (MORNING AFTER) NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (£2,793: 2m 4f) (8 runners)

1 2121 PHAR LESS HASSLE 30 (CD,S) T McGovern 7-12-4 ... C Murray (7)
2 P31/ BALLYBOLLEN 622P (S) M Pipe 7-11-6 ... G Tormey
3 0 GILL'S GALE 20 R Rowe 7-11-6 ... P Holley
4 21-3 GREYTON 14 (S) R Rowe 6-11-6 ... D Fortt (3)
5 P632 NEWBY END 27 M Madgwick 5-11-6 ... J Goldstein (5)
6 0 ONEFORTHEFROG 24 C Egerton 6-11-6 ... L Aspell
7 -606 OUR MAN FLIN 15 (G) Mrs A E Johnson 6-11-6 ... R Farrant
8 40 POUNSLEY MILL 20 J Gifford 6-11-6 ... P Hide

9-4 Newby End, 5-2 Phar Less Hassle, 4-1 Greyton, 5-1 Ballybollen, 10-1 Pounsley Mill, 16-1 Our Man Flin, 25-1 Gill's Gale, Oneforthefrog.

1.25 TINTO HILL HANDICAP CHASE (£2,851: 2m 5f) (4)

1 -4U2 HAWAIIAN YOUTH 13 (D,F,G,S) G McCourt 11-11-10 ... D Fortt (3)
2 43-P REGAL AURA 18 (CD,F,G,S) D O'Brien 9-10-11 ... P Hide
3 4-P1 RAGAMUFF 17 (D,S) P Hobbs 8-10-2 ... R Farrant
4 P644 INDIAN RUN 18 (G,S) R Hodges 10-10-0 ... T Dascombe

11-8 Hawaiian Youth, 7-4 Ragamuff, 4-1 Regal Aura, 6-1 Indian Run

2.00 SOUTHERN F.M. RESOLUTION JUVENILE NOVICES HURDLE (4-Y-O: £5,199: 2m 4f) (4)

1 1 COOL PERFORMANCE 29 (S) Mrs D Haine 11-4 ... G Tormey
2 0410 LORD OF LOVE 13 (S) D Williams 11-4 ... Mr N Fehily (7)
3 3 GHOST PATH 18 R O'Sullivan 10-9 ... J Goldstein (5)
4 U IVORY CHARM 36 L A Dace 10-9 ... P Hide

4-7 Cool Performance, 3-1 Lord Of Love, 5-1 Ghost Path, 25-1 Ivory Charm.

2.35 ELLIS AND PARTNERS NOVICES CHASE (£2,705: 2m) (4)

1 P-3P KELLY MAC 18 (D,F,G,S) D O'Brien 9-11-4 ... M Batchelor (5)
2 POP/ MUTLEY 590 Miss K George 9-11-4 ... R Massey
3 6/5- OLD ARCHIVES 573 (D,F) L Wells 10-11-4 ... P Holley
4 44F2 ROYAL PREDICA 28 M Pipe 5-10-8 ... G Tormey

4-11 Royal Predica, 5-2 Kelly Mac, 20-1 Old Archives, 33-1 Mutley.

3.05 CHAMPAGNE DELBECK HANDICAP CHASE (£2,916: 3m 1f 110yd) (6)

1 P-01 SHANAGORE WARRIOR 18 (C,S) S Mellor 7-11-10 ... C Webb
2 P33- HOLY STING 247 (S) J De Giles 10-11-9 ... Mr S Stronge (7)
3 -1P5 BROOK BEE 18 (CD,G,S) N Gaselee 7-11-6 ... J Goldstein (5)
4 034F HIGH THYME 3 (B,S) P Hobbs 8-11-2 ... R Farrant
5 2/3P RIVER GALA 31 (G) R Hodges 9-10-6 ... P Holley
6 P-06 LEITRIM COTTAGE 29 (B) T McGovern 8-10-0 ... X Aizpuru (3)

2-1 Shanagore Warrior, 3-1 High Thyme, 7-2 Brook Bee, 5-1 Holy Sting, 8-1 others.

3.35 LADBROKE LAST RACE HANDICAP HURDLE (Qualifier: £2,740: 2m 1f) (7)

1 4211 NESSUN DORO 13 (CD,S) S Mellor 7-12-0 ... C Webb
2 -613 MILLMOUNT 17 (B,BF,C,G) T McGovern 9-10-13 ... X Aizpuru (3)
3 2146 IT'S WALLACE 27 (B,C,S) J C Poulton 6-10-7 ... M Batchelor (5)
4 -013 LIMIT THE DAMAGE 18 (CD,S) J Wayle 7-10-5 ... J Goldstein (5)
5 P445 DONTDRESSFORDINNER 44 (CD,F,G) R Hodges 9-10-3 ... T Dascombe
6 -0P1 ZAFARELLI 17 (B,D,S) J Jenkins 5-10-0 ... R Farrant
7 4024 DOCTOR BRAVIOUS 44 J R Poulton 6-10-6 ... Mr N Fehily (7)

2-1 Nessun Doro, 7-2 Millmount, 4-1 Limit The Damage, 8-1 It's Wallace, Zafarelli, 10-1 Dontdressfordinner, Doctor Bravious.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: M Pipe, 31 winners from 65 runners, 47.7%; Miss K George, 3 from 12, 25.0%; Mrs D Haine, 4 from 17, 23.5%; C Egerton, 4 from 20, 20.0%; T McGovern, 10 from 56, 17.9%; R Hodges, 10 from 58, 17.2%.

JOCKEYS: C Webb, 3 winners from 8 rides, 37.5%; R Farrant, 3 from 14, 21.4%; T Dascombe, 5 from 32, 15.6%; M Batchelor, 7 from 53, 13.2%; P Hide, 7 from 59, 11.9%. Only qualifiers.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Catterick: 12.50 Serenade. 1.20 Bold Legacy, King's Hussar, Jago. 1.55 Desperate Days. Cheltenham: 1.00 Hfm Of Praise. 2.45 Senor El Betrutti. Exeter: 1.10 Brelache. 2.10 Saxon Duke. Leicester: 2.50 Boulevard Bay. Plumpton: 3.05 Leitrim Cottage.

LEICESTER

THUNDERER
12.45 Bora Bora. 1.15 Catherine's Way. 1.50 Round Robin. 2.20 Shanavogh. 2.50 Padara. 3.25 Bessie Browne.

GOING: HEAVY (CHASE COURSE GOOD TO SOFT) SIS
7.30AM INSPECTION

12.45 HUMBERSTONE NOVICES HURDLE (£3,392: 2m 4f 110yd) (4 runners)

1 2P13 BORA BORA 15 (S) N Twiston-Davies 6-11-7 ... T Jenks
2 4 BRUSHFIRE 32 Miss V Williams 6-11-6 ... R Thornton
3 1 HAPPY HUSSAR 22 (S) H Daly 6-11-6 ... D Gallagher
4 4-06 SAINT JOE 17 O Sherwood 6-11-6 ... J A McCarthy

6-4 Bora Bora, 2-1 Happy Hussar, 3-1 Brushfire, 8-1 Saint Joe.

1.15 NEW YEAR NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (£3,496: 2m 1f) (5)

1 -421 CATHERINE'S WAY 24 (S) A Turnell 7-11-10 ... L Harvey
2 U6-4 SILVER SIROCCO 29 (S) Mrs M Jones 7-11-6 ... W Marston
3 P/42 HANG'EM OUT TO DRY 17 (S) E L James 8-11-5 ... J A McCarthy
4 PP-5 MERRY SHOT 27 (D,G) Mrs J Pitman 7-11-2 ... D Leahy
5 5310 THE LADY SCORES 3 (S) S Dow 7-11-1 ... R Thornton

11-10 Catherine's Way, 5-2 Hang'em Out To Dry, 11-2 Merry Shot, 8-1 Silver Sirocco, 16-1 The Lady Scores.

1.50 PARSLEY SELLING HURDLE (£1,842: 2m) (5)

1 00/0 PACKITIN PARKY 16 D McCain 6-11-5 ... A C Coyle (5)
2 2303 ROUND ROBIN 15 (B) Mrs A E Johnson 5-11-5 ... J A McCarthy
3 5342 STRETCHING 22 A Juckes 6-11-5 ... O McPhail (5)
4 -040 REMEMBER STAR 3 A D Smith 6-11-0 ... G Supple (3)
5 P03 SYLPHIDE 24 H Manners 4-10-2 ... O Burrows (5)

10-11 Stretching, 7-4 Round Robin, 8-1 Sylphide, 12-1 Remember Star, 25-1 Packitin Parky.

2.20 WIGSTON HANDICAP CHASE (£7,328: 2m 4f 110yd) (5)

1 5235 SHINING LIGHT 29 (CD,F,G,S) D Nicholson 10-12-0 ... R Thornton
2 F3PP DENICHEUR 16 (G) Mrs L Taylor 8-11-10 ... O McPhail (5)
3 P1P1 SIERRA BAY 15 (D,F,S) O Sherwood 8-11-9 ... J A McCarthy
4 F1-3 SHANAVOGH 24 (D,F,G,S) G M Moore 8-11-3 ... R Garritty
5 P40- CITTADINO 233 (D,G,S) C Thornton 9-10-0 ... D Leahy

7-4 Sierra Bay, 11-4 Shining Light, 100-30 Shanavogh, 7-1 Denicheur, 12-1 Cittadino.

2.50 FORD MAIDEN CHASE (£3,106: 2m 4f 110yd) (5)

1 F0FP BOULEVARD BAY 15 (B,G) Mrs P Robeson 8-11-5 ... M Richards
2 -44P CHECK THE DECK 28 C Mann 8-11-5 ... J Magee
3 5-63 PADARA 27 (S) D Nicholson 7-11-5 ... R Thornton
4 P-0U THE HAPPY MONARCH 17 Mrs J Pitman 7-11-5 ... D Leahy
5 24-6 GILL'MAR 32 T Forster 5-10-8 ... D Gallagher

1-2 Padara, 7-2 Check The Deck, 6-1 Gill'mar, 14-1 The Happy Monarch, 50-1 Boulevard Bay.

3.25 GLEBE HANDICAP HURDLE (£3,460: 2m 4f 110yd) (5)

1 /030 SHOOFK 35 (S) S Dow 8-11-10 ... D Gallagher
2 -285 DARK KESTREL 22 (S) C Mann 5-11-6 ... C Rafter (7)
3 2P-3 BESSIE BROWNE 6 (G) G Hubbard 7-11-2 ... R Thornton
4 0PP0 FRONTIER FLIGHT 34 (D,F,G,S) P Hiatt 9-10-0 ... T Siddall (5)
5 /80P FONTAINE FABLES 23 (B,S) E L James 8-10-0 ... D Leahy

5-4 Bessie Browne, 9-4 Dark Kestrel, 11-4 Shoofk, 14-1 Frontier Flight, 33-1 Fontaine Fables.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: H Manners, 4 winners from 8 runners, 50.0%; N Twiston-Davies, 9 from 35, 25.7%; D Nicholson, 13 from 56, 23.2%; T Forster, 5 from 26, 19.2%; Mrs J Pitman, 9 from 49, 18.4%; O Sherwood, 4 from 24, 16.7%.

JOCKEYS: G Supple, 3 winners from 7 rides, 42.9%; D Gallagher, 5 from 38, 13.2%; T Jenks, 3 from 23, 13.0%; W Marston, 9 from 78, 11.5%. Only qualifiers.

LINGFIELD PARK

THUNDERER
1.05 Muhandis. 1.30 Daunted. 2.05 Such Boldness. 2.40 *Jubilee Scholar.* 3.15 *Shabaash.* 3.45 Comeoutofthefog.

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: 6F-1M, LOW BEST SIS

1.05 HANGOVER HANDICAP (£2,185: 1m 4f) (15 runners)

1 113- WAASEF 11 (CD) Miss G Kelleway 6-9-13 ... P Fredericks (7) 8
2 /34- SPICK AND SPAN 27J P Hedger 5-9-5 ... Dane O'Neill 9
3 334- GINZBOURG 21 (BF,S) R O'Sullivan 5-9-4 ... F Norton 5
4 302- MUHANDIS 21 (B,C,F) G L Moore 5-9-4 ... Candy Morris 10
5 000- BORDER TRADER 48J J S Moore 4-9-2 ... T O'Neill (7) 1
6 006- SILVERSMITH 25 S Dow 4-9-0 ... P Doe (5) 14
7 0/0- GOLDEN FAWN 11 M Haynes 6-8-11 ... J Lowe 2
8 625- EVEZIO RUFO 10 (V,C,D) N Littmoden 7-8-8 ... T G McLaughlin 4
9 161- SAMMY'S SHUFFLE 11 (B,C,G) R Flower 4-8-7 (6ex) ... D Sweeney 12
10 490- LAYIN BAY 93 (F) S C Williams 4-8-6 ... G Carter 7
11 630- HARVEY WHITE 37 (BF,F,G,S) J Pearce 7-8-6 ... A Polli (5) 11
12 000- JILLY WOO 72 P Hayward 5-8-2 ... R Brisland (7) 15
13 020- SAPPHIRE SON 21 (F,G) P Clarke 7-8-0 ... S Righton (7) 3
14 000- CALL MY GUEST 21J (D,S) R Peacock 9-7-13 ... G Bardwell 6
15 003- SLEAVE SILK 31 W Musson 4-7-10 ... J Quinn 13

7-2 Sammy's Shuffle, 4-1 Waasef, 5-1 Muhandis, 8-1 Ginzbourg, 10-1 Spick And Span, Evezio Rufo, Sapphire Son, 14-1 others.

1.30 NEW YEAR STAKES (3-Y-O: £2,608: 1m) (9)

1 321- DAUNTED 13 (B,CD) G L Moore 9-8 ... Dane O'Neill 3
2 000- GOLD COAST 35 S Dow 9-0 ... P Doe (5) 5
3 VEGAS J S Moore 8-13 ... T O'Neill (7) 2
4 014- PADDOCK INSPECTION 23 (B,C) Mrs L Stubbs 8-12 ... N Day 9
5 41- AN EXECUTIVE DO 154 (G) P Haslam 8-11 ... P Goode (7) 4
6 400- KING FLYER 87 H Collingridge 8-10 ... D Williams (7) 7
7 000- MARCO'S PAL 101 A Jarvis 8-10 ... D Sweeney 1
8 300- ITSALLHAPPENING 21 T Naughton 8-1 ... J Quinn 6
9 556- CANYOUHEARME 13 N Callaghan 7-10 ... J Lowe 8

7-4 Daunted, 3-1 An Executive Do, 9-2 Paddock Inspection, 5-1 Itsallhappening, 14-1 *Gold Coast, Canyouhearme,* 16-1 King Flyer, 25-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: P Haslam, 21 winners from 110 runners, 19.1%; M Johnston, 55 from 317, 17.7%; Miss G Kelleway, 45 from 290, 15.5%; N Littmoden, 10 from 65, 15.4%; A Jarvis, 9 from 67, 13.4%.

JOCKEYS: P Fredericks, 5 winners from 25 rides, 20.0%; N Pollard, 8 from 46, 17.4%; D Sweeney, 23 from 153, 15.0%; S Whitworth, 55 from 397, 13.9%; G Carter, 30 from 235, 12.8%.

2.05 AULD LANG SYNE MAIDEN STAKES (£3,680: 1m 2f) (9)

1 062- HALF TIDE 13 P Mitchell 5-9-0 ... N Day 3
2 432- SUCH BOLDNESS 21 Miss G Kelleway 5-9-0 ... P Fredericks (7) 6
3 /53- PRIMORDIAL 11 S Dow 4-8-12 ... P Doe (5) 9
4 0- RING CHEQUER'S 184 T Clement 4-8-12 ... Nicola Howarth 2
5 0- THEKRYAATI 243 M Johnston 4-8-12 ... G Carter 4
6 /00- TIERRA DEL FUEGO 72 H Collingridge 5-8-9 ... Dale Gibson 1
7 550- BLUE DAWN 3 B Johnson 4-8-7 ... T Sprake 7
8 IN GOOD ORDER G L Moore 4-8-7 ... R Brisland (7) 8
9 405- SANTARENE 35 P Howling 4-8-7 ... J Quinn 5

7-4 Such Boldness, 4-1 Primordial, 5-1 Half Tide, 7-1 Thekryaati, In Good Order, 10-1 Blue Dawn, 16-1 Santarene, 25-1 others.

2.40 FIRST FOOTING CLASSIFIED STAKES (£2,068: 1m 2f) (8)

1 145- *JUBILEE SCHOLAR 13 (B,BF,CD) G L Moore 6-9-3 ... F Norton 4*
2 043- CRITICAL AIR 13 (G) A McNae 4-9-1 ... T Sprake 2
3 323- CONFRONTER 13 (CD,F,G,S) S Dow 10-9-0 ... P Doe (5) 1
4 606- MULTI FRANCHISE 18J (CD,F) Mrs L Jewell 6-9-0 ... Dane O'Neill 7
5 /50- SLIP JIG 25 (C,S) K Burke 6-9-0 ... D Sweeney 3
6 351- KINGS ARROW 21 (CD) P Howling 4-8-12 ... J Quinn 8
7 350- MARK TIME 18J P Hedger 4-8-12 ... A Clark 6
8 020- SPECIAL PERSON 153 (C) P Mitchell 4-8-9 ... N Day 5

11-4 Kings Arrow, 9-2 Confronter, 5-1 Critical Air, 11-2 Jubilee Scholar, Special Person, 8-1 Mark Time, 10-1 Slip Jig, 16-1 Multi Franchise.

3.15 WELCOME TO 1999 HANDICAP (3-Y-O: £3,518: 7f) (5)

1 114- MISS TAKE 2 (V,BF,D) P Evans 9-7 ... T G McLaughlin 5
2 300- REDOUBLE 45 R Hannon 9-3 ... R Smith (7) 4
3 535- SHABAASH 37 (F) P Howling 8-8 ... J Quinn 1
4 050- PERCHANCER 88 P Haslam 8-8 ... Dale Gibson 2
5 401- DREAM ON ME 25 (C) G L Moore 8-7 ... J Fanning 3

2-1 Dream On Me, 5-2 Miss Take, 7-2 Shabaash, 5-1 Redouble, 8-1 Perchancer.

3.45 HAPPY NEW YEAR HANDICAP (£2,709: 6f) (12)

1 001- FACILE TIGRE 57 (D,F,S) S Dow 4-10-0 ... P Doe (5) 6
2 005- TEOFILIO 13 (F) A McNae 5-9-11 ... T Sprake 12
3 000- PAGEBOY 140 (B,CD,F) P Haslam 10-9-10 ... L Charnock 3
4 041- ANOKATO 21 (B,C,F) T Mills 5-9-9 ... S Whitworth 5
5 006- JOHN BOWDLER MUSIC 57 M Johnston 4-9-8 ... J Fanning 8
6 334- COMEOUTOFTHEFOG 13 (C) A McNae 4-9-6 ... N Pollard (5) 2
7 010- ACID TEST 16 (CD,F) M A Buckley 4-9-3 ... R FitzPatrick (5) 4
8 060- HALF TONE 13 (B,C,F,G,S) R Flower 7-8-13 ... Dane O'Neill 11
9 054- OUT LIKE MAGIC 25 (F) P Evans 4-8-11 ... T G McLaughlin 10
10 055- SHARP IMP 37 (B,CD,F) R Flower 9-8-5 ... S Drowne 1
11 005- JUSTINIANUS 25 (CD,G) J Bridger 7-7-10 ... J Quinn 7
12 602- DANCING JACK 25 (C) J Bridger 5-7-10 ... G Bardwell 9



4-1 Anokato, 5-1 Facile Tigre, 7-1 Comeoutofthefog, 8-1 John Bowdler Music, Acid Test, 10-1 *Pageboy, Out Like Magic, Sharp Imp, Dancing Jack,* 12-1 others.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Warwick

Going: chase: good to soft, soft in places; *hurdles: soft.*

12.50 (2m hdle) 1, **PREMIER GENERATION** (M A Fitzgerald, 11-10 fav, **Timekeeper's top rating**); 2, **Arctic Fancy** (W Marston, 16-1); 3, **Choice Cat** (R Johnson, 33-1). ALSO RAN: 3-1 Nashkepour (4th), 4 Ricardo, 12 Chappewa (5th), 25 Filou du Bois, Misconduct, Shopaholic (6th), 33 Fit To Bust, Gemstone, Jalb, 50 Mister River, Salford Quay, 66 Cartoucha, Elvis, 100 Dancing In Rio, Isca Maiden, Komesta. 19 ran. 3l, 6l, 3l, 6l, 9l. N Henderson at Lambourn. Tote: £2.20; £1.50, £5.30, £9.70. DF: £17.90. CSF: £22.47.

1.20 (2m ch) 1, **NATIVE CHARM** (J A McCarthy, 2-1 fav); 2, **River Wye** (V Slattery, 3-1); 3, **Sandrift** (G Tormey, 100-1). ALSO RAN: 9-4 Sol Music (5th), 15-2 Cabellus, 12 Royal Scimitar (4th), 100 Mill Bay Sam, Tudor Falcon (6th). 8 ran. 4l, 27l, ¾l, dist, 19l. C Morlock at Wantage. Tote: £3.30; £1.20, £1.10, £7.00. DF: £4.20. CSF: £7.55.

1.50 (2m 3f hdle) 1, **ARTIC GROUND** (A Maguire, 7-2); 2, **Supreme Troglodyte** (J R Kavanagh, 33-1); 3, **Precious Island** (Gary Lyons, 20-1). ALSO RAN: 11-8 fav Charlie Banker, 4 Cashaplenty (4th), 8 Crazy Crusader, 12 Harrigale Moss (5th), 14 Rash Reflection, 50 Lime Street Blues, Sylcan Express (6th). 10 ran. NR: Berlin Blue. 3½l, 13l, 4l, 4l, 11l. P Webber at Banbury. Tote: £4.50; £1.30, £5.90, £5.30. DF: £52.10. CSF: £100.50. Tricast: £1,861.42.

2.20 (3m 2f ch) 1, **SMARTY** (A P McCoy, 13-8); 2, **Trouble Ahead** (N Williamson, 6-4 fav); 3, **Majestic Storm** (J Culloty, 11-1). ALSO RAN: 6-1 About Turn, 11 Bullens Match (4th), 40 Raging Gale, 50 Alpha Leather (5th), Coole Cherry. 8 ran. 21l, dist, 8l, 1¼l. Mrs J Pitman at Upper Lambourn. Tote: £2.60; £1.40, £1.10, £2.10. DF: £3.30. CSF: £4.30.

2.50 (2m hdle) 1, **YOUNG SPARTACUS** (R Johnson, 9-2); 2, **Tonka** (C Llewellyn, 9-2); 3, **Wesley's Lad** (D J Burchell, 11-2). ALSO RAN: 6-4 fav Siren Song (5th), 6 Ranger Sloane (6th), 14 Manileno (4th). 6 ran. 3l, 13l, 4l, ½l, ¼l. H Daly at Ludlow. Tote: £5.30; £2.10, £1.80. DF: £10.50. CSF: £22.42.

3.20 (2m 4f 110yd ch) 1, **CARDINAL RULE** (N Williamson, 5-1); 2, **River Bay** (A Maguire, 12-1); 3, **Mr Snaggle** (R Johnson, 8-1). ALSO RAN: 4-1 fav Around The Gale, 6 Hawaiian Sam, 7 Callevа Star (4th), 15-2 Easby Joker, 10 Plunder Bay, 11 High Mood (5th), 14 Sagaman (6th). 10 ran. 5l, 4l, hd, 22l, 19l. Miss Venetia Williams at Hereford. Tote: £6.00; £2.30, £2.60, £2.10. DF: £17.90. *Trifecta: £271.20.* CSF: £56.71. *Tricast: £494.66.*

3.50 (2m flat) 1, **PERK ALERT** (R Massey, evens fav); 2, **Island Mist** (R Johnson, 8-1); 3, **King Wizard** (G Tormey, 12-1). *ALSO RAN: 8-1 Kingsbridge,* 10 Sunit Boy (5th), 12 Red Mist, Thanks Big Fella, 16 Get On George, Smoking Gun, 20 Casa Fina, 25 Begin Again, 33 Combe Springs, Meadows Boy (4th), Two Paddies (6th), 40 Maybe Later, Taco's Revenge, 50 Caccini, Callstown Lord, 66 Herbal Wise, Witheswaay Lady. 20 ran. NR: Puzzleman. 6l, 1½l, 4l, ½l, ¼l. D Nicholson at Temple Guiting. Tote: £2.30; £1.40, £2.50, £3.10. DF: £9.90. CSF: £9.92.

Jackpot: £7,100.00 - part won (pool of £4,413.88 carried forward to Cheltenham today).

Placepot: £832.10.

Quadpot: £137.50.

Fontwell Park

Going: soft

1.10 (2m 6f 110yd hdle) 1, **JIM JAM JOEY** (J Goldstein, 7-2); 2, *Fine Attitude* (10-1); 3, **Jazz Duke** (40-1). ALSO RAN: 2-1 fav Yorkshire Edition, 50 Night Thyne (4th). *10 ran. NR: Kean Bid. 5l, 10l. D Grissell.* Tote: £4.70; £1.70, £2.50, £6.40. DF: £20.50. CSF: £36.47.

1.40 (2m 2f 110yd hdle) 1, **SPRINT UP** (R Greene, 8-1); 2, **Mullintor** (4-5 fav); 3, **Memory's Music** (12-1). ALSO RAN: 8-1 Carol's Dream (4th). 9 ran. NR: Meltburn. 13l, ¾l. M Pipe. Tote: £7.60; £2.30, £1.20, £1.70. *DF: £6.60.* CSF: £14.43.

2.10 (3m 2f 110yd ch) 1, **QUIET MOMENTS** (R Farrant, 3-1 jt-fav); 2, **Colonel Colt** (3-1 jt-fav). 9 ran. Dist. P Murphy. Tote: £3.50; £2.70, £2.40. DF: £8.50. CSF: £12.30.

2.40 (2m 6f 110yd hdle) 1, **JUST NIP** (J Osborne, 3-1, **Richard Evans's nap**); 2, **Welsh Silk** (11-2); 3, **Belmore Rock** (11-2). ALSO RAN: 7-4 fav Fadalko (5th), 14 Far-Dawn (4th). 6 ran. NR: Top Note. 1¼, 3½l. Mrs L Richards. Tote: £5.00; £1.50, £2.10, £2.00. DF: £12.70. CSF: £21.68. Tricast: £96.87. Top Note (8/1) was withdrawn not under starter's orders. Rule 4 applies to board prices only, deduction 10p in the pound.

3.10 (2m 3f ch) 1, **JOHN DRUMM** (Mr P Cowley, 5-2); 2, **Another Course** (10-1); 3, **Twin Falls** (4-1). ALSO RAN: 9-4 fav Ciprian Queen (5th), 100 *Prerogative* (4th). 5 ran. Nk, 2½l. *P Webber.* Tote: £3.20; £1.40, £2.60. DF: £9.20. CSF: £20.33.

3.40 (2m 2f 110yd hdle) 1, **TAKEAMEMO** (J Osborne, 7-2); 2, **Nordance** (3-1); 3, **Another Night** (5-2 fav). ALSO RAN: 7-2 Macy (4th). 5 ran. NR: Fountain Bid. 10l, 17l. O Sherwood. Tote: £4.50; £1.90, £1.90. *DF: £5.80. CSF: £13.53.*

Placepot: £157.90.

Quadpot: £25.70.

Catterick

Going: good, good to soft in places

12.30 (2m hdle) 1, **ES-GO** (R Bastiman, 100-30); 2, **Alhawa** (B Powell, 11-1); 3, *Laurentide* (S Taylor, 8-1). *ALSO RAN:* 9-4 fav Finisterre, 6 Brilliant Star, 12 Albert The Bear (5th), Drive Assured, 20 Azores, 25 *Jolly Minster (4th)*, 33 Ballina Boy, Lanacar Lane, 50 Enigma Bell, 100 College Don (6th), Our Frankie. 14 ran. NR: *Chevalier Errant.* 6l, 7l, nk, 11l, 6l. R Bastiman at Wetherby. Tote: £4.60; £1.30, £2.50, £1.70. DF: £21.60. CSF: £34.27.

1.00 (2m ch) 1, **FILS DE CRESSON** (B Powell, 11-10 fav); 2, **Doc-Halliday** (B Harding, 10-1); 3, **Independent Grey** (Mr J Crowley, 3-1). ALSO RAN: 10-1 Ballydavid (5th), *10 King's Country (4th),* 12 Prolific Agency, 100 Pacific War, Persuasive Talent (6th). 8 ran. 12l, 1l, 10l, 13l, 17l. J Adam at Gordon. Tote: £2.20; £1.10, £1.90, £1.80. DF: £5.50. CSF: £10.95.

1.30 (2m hdle) 1, DORANS WAY (N Hannity, 13-2); 2, **Connel's Croft** (R Thornton, 10-1); 3, **Sefton Blake** (C McCormack, 11-2). *ALSO RAN:* 9-4 fav Brancepeth Belle, 8 Salinger, 10 Two Bills, 12 Ghostly Apparition (4th), 16 Mendeluci (5th), 20 Western General (6th), Whatdidyousay, 25 Captain Tandy, Rinus Major, 50 Berdansk, 100 Arrange A Game. 14 ran. 1¾l, 10l, 2½l, nk, 3l. G Moore at Middleham. Tote: £7.30; £2.30, £2.00, £2.00. DF: £63.26. CSF: £59.06. Tricast: £354.70.

2.00 (2m 3f ch) 1, **BOYZONTOOWA** (R McGrath, 14-1); 2, **Sousse** (G Lee, 13-2); 3, **Chevalier Bayard** (B Powell, 10-1). ALSO RAN: 11-4 fav Carlisle Bandito's (4th), 13-2 Meltemison, 8 Pin Mony, Stonesby (5th), 10 Master Hyde, 20 Somerby, 25 Bonny Rigg (6th), 33 Charnwood Jack. 11 ran. 4l, 1½l, sh hd, dist, 2½l. W Storey at Consett. Tote: £17.80, £4.60, £1.90, £3.20. DF: £78.10. CSF: £87.27. Tricast: £865.36.

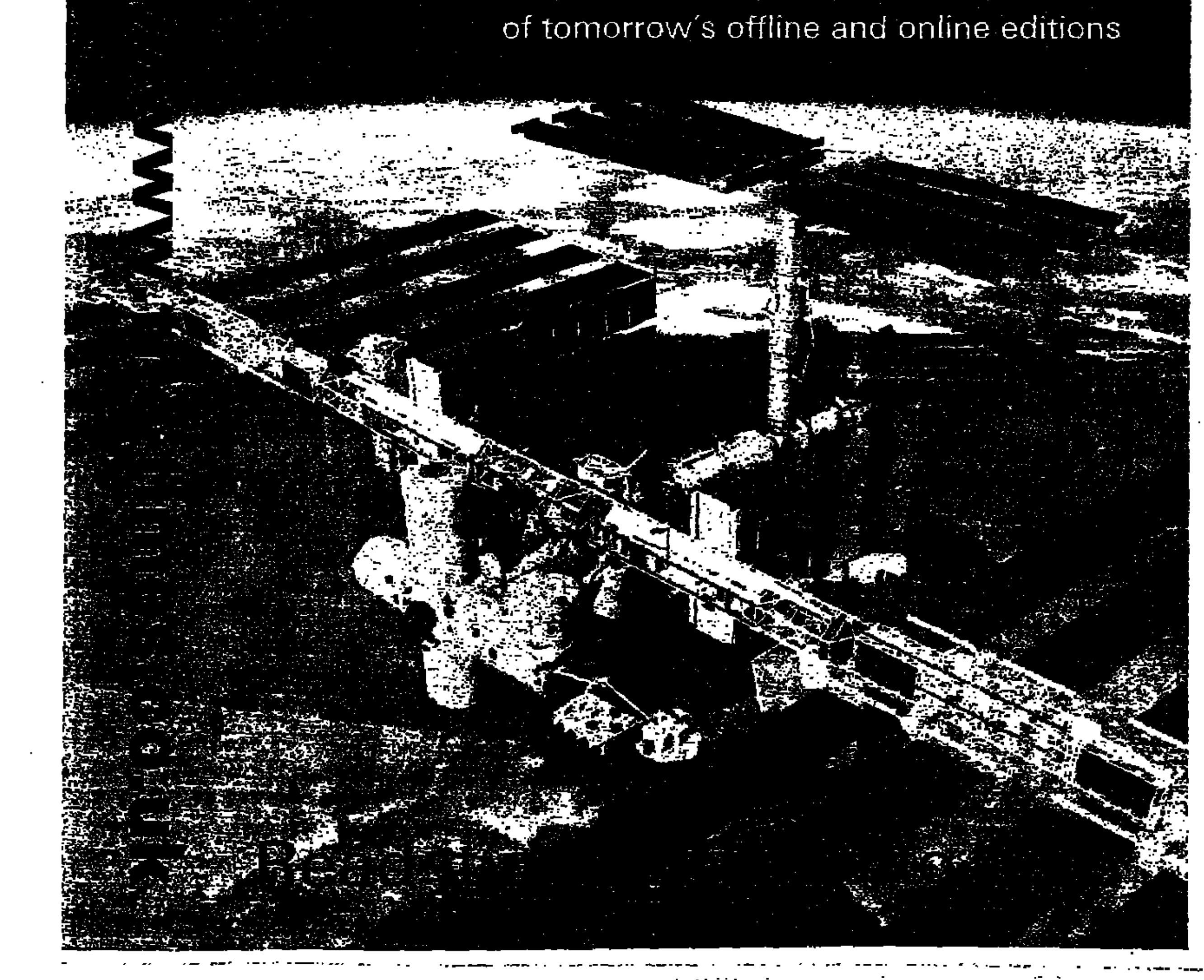
2.30 (2m hdle) 1, **GENERAL FLIGHT** (Mr C Rae, 6-1); 2, **Begorrat** (A Dobbin, 5-4 fav); 3, **Aginor** (R Thornton, 16-1). ALSO RAN: 6-1 Molinsburn, 10 Saguaro, 12 Gay Galant, 14 Come And Run (4th), Eat Your Pear, Mill Orchid, 16 Chase The Ace, 33 Atlantic Power (6th), Grassman, Scraptastic, *The Lambton Worm (5th),* 100 Windyedge. 15 ran. 1½l, 3l, 7l, 7l, 13l. Andrew Turnell at Wantage. Tote: £6.30; £1.90, £1.60, £3.10 *DF: £5.20. CSF: £13.94.*

3.00 (3m 1f 110yd ch) 1, **THE NEXT WALTZ** (R Supple, 3-1); 2, **Gale Force** (B Gratten, 14-1); 3, **Arctic Fox** (P Niven, 5-2 fav). ALSO RAN: 13-2 Hag's Way, 7 Grate Deel (6th), *14 I'm The Man (5th),* Kings Sermon, 16 Church Law, 20 Bit O'Speed, Cullane Lake, 25 Dark Oak, 33 Danbys Gorse (4th), *50 Another Red,* Copperhurst. 14 ran. 8l, 2l, 13l, ¾l, 21l. L Lungo at Carrutherstown. Tote: £4.30; £2.40, £3.70, £1.50. DF: £40.40. CSF: £37.88. Tricast: £113.32.

3.30 (3m 1f 110yd hdle) 1, FLAT TOP (C McCormack, 11-4 fav); 2, **Jessie's Prospect** (R McGrath, 8-1); 3, **Hitchhiker** (N Hannity, 4-1). *ALSO RAN:* 5-1 Pennyahei, 12 Kinda Groovy (6th), Rascally (5th), Solomon Springs, 16 Mr Christie, 20 Adib, Jayfcee, 25 Talathath (4th), 33 Chanson d'Amour, Denticulata, 66 Barnstormer. 14 ran. 1l, 21l, 2l, 5l, 1l. M W Easterby at Sheriff Hutton. Tote: £3.70; £1.60, £3.20, £1.20. DF: £11.40. CSF: £21.78. Tricast: £83.86.

Placepot: £37.30.

Quadpot: £22.10.





SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Begin Bridge with *The Times*: Lesson 37 – Responding One of a Suit

As I have said before, one of the many purposes behind bidding is to discover if there is an eight-card major-suit fit. Consequently, all you need to respond One of a Major to partner's opening is at least four cards in the suit and 6 or more HCP.

Why 6 HCP? The answer to this is easy to see if you consider that there is rarely any point in responding unless you think that a game may be on. Otherwise let partner play the hand at the one level in his best suit for if you force the auction higher you are more likely to go down in whatever contract you eventually settle.

With 20 or more HCP partner would usually open at the two level (as we will see in a later article). So, the normal maximum for a one-level opening bid is about 19 HCP. You generally need about 25 HCP between your two hands for game, therefore you should usually respond with 6 HCP but pass with fewer than that.

What do you respond to a One Diamond opening bid with the following hands:

(A)	♠ KQJ5 ♡ 874 ◇ 532 ♣ K65	(B)	♠ AQ4 ♡ J873 ◇ 87 ♣ Q1065	(C)	♠ KJ76 ♡ KJ76 ◇ 65 ♣ 874
(D)	♠ KJ1065 ♡ 874 ◇ 532 ♣ Q5	(E)	♠ AQJ4 ♡ 762 ◇ 10872 ♣ 63	(F)	♠ 10872 ♡ 762 ◇ AQJ4 ♣ 63

With *Hands (A)* and *(B)* it is quite straightforward. In both instances you have a four-card major, so bid it. It doesn't matter if it is a strong one as on *Hand (A)* or a weak one as on *Hand (B)*. With both majors, as in *Hand (C)*, bid the lower, One Heart. If partner has a four-card spade suit he will bid it and the fit will be found on the next round.

Just because a bid needs only four cards doesn't mean you have to bid something else with more. Respond One Spade on *Hand (D)*. *Hands (E)* and *(F)* raise a point which, in my view, is often misunderstood by even quite good players. When you have support for partner's minor suit you should use your common sense. It is true that you have not yet found the magic eight-card major fit, so by all means bid a good four-card major such as on *Hand (E)*. But when your major is poor and your support good, as on *Hand (F)*, this is asking for trouble. You should raise partner immediately. After all, if he has a good hand and wants to proceed he can always introduce a four-card spade suit if he has one.

☐ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

TYMPF
a. Tissue paper
b. Silver coin
c. A snare drum

NERF BAR
a. A drinking den
b. Nut/raisin chocolate
c. Bumper

PERFECTA
a. A betting ploy
b. Tobacco
c. Highest score

HAGGADAH
a. A feminist party
b. An epidemic
c. Sacred writing

Answers on page 37

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Hastings

The Hastings Premier is now well and truly underway at the Cinque Ports Hotel in Hastings. Amongst those who got off to a good start was Sergei Shipov of Russia, Matthew Sadler, of Great Britain, and the Bosnian grandmaster Ivan Sokolov.

White: Sergei Shipov
Black: Tony Miles
Hastings 1998

Queen's Gambit Accepted

1	d4	d5
2	c4	dxc4
3	Nf3	Nf6
4	e3	e6
5	Bxc4	c5
6	0-0	a6
7	Bb3	b6
8	e4	cxd4
9	e5	Nfd7
10	Qxd4	Bb7
11	Qf4	Nc5
12	Nc3	Nxb3
13	axb3	Be7
14	Qg3	Kf8
15	Rd1	Nd7
16	Ra4	Qe8
17	Rg4	g6
18	Bh6+	Kg8
19	Ng5	Bf8
20	Bxf8	Kxf8
21	Rgd4	Bc6
22	Rf4	f5
23	exf6	e5
24	Qd3	Black resigns

Diagram of final position

White: Ivan Sokolov
***Black:* John Emms**
Hastings 1998

Nimzo-Indian Defence

1	d4	Nf6
2	c4	e6
3	Nf3	b6
4	Nc3	Bb4
5	Qb3	c5
6	Bg5	Bb7
7	Rd1	0-0
8	e3	cxd4
9	exd4	Bxf3
10	gxf3	Be7
11	Rg1	Re8
12	Be2	d6
13	f4	Nbd7
14	Qc2	d5
15	f5	exf5
16	Qxf5	dxc4
17	Bxc4	g6
18	Qf3	Qc7
19	Bb3	Qxh2
20	Rh1	Qc7
21	Kf1	Qd8
22	Re1	Rf8
23	Ba4	b5
24	Bxb5	Rb8
25	Bxd7	Qxd7
26	Rxe7	Qxe7
27	Bxf6	Qe6
28	d5	Qa6+
29	Kg2	Rb6
30	Ne4	Black resigns

Keene online

You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by e-mail. The address is keene@chessaol.com. The best contributions from *Times* readers will be published either here or in the Saturday *Times* Weekend column.

Times book

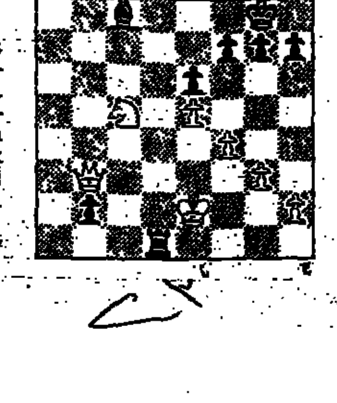
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☐ Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Speelman — Schauwecker, Hastings 1972. Black could immediately promote his b2-pawn but then White would capture the rook on d1 and the game would most likely fizzle out to a draw. Can Black improve on this?



Solution on page 37

هكذا من الأصل

Richard Evans believes Williams will stay on cloud nine at Cheltenham today


JULIAN HERBERT/ALLSPORT

Lady Rebecca, left, who has registered two victories at Cheltenham in the past two months, is fancied to make a winning return to Prestbury Park today in the Tote Handicap Hurdle

Lady Rebecca ready to extend run

ON A day when declarations of intent are made by much of humanity in pursuit of leading a better life, it is not too difficult to guess the new year resolution likely to be made this morning by Venetia Williams.

The talented trainer, who was voted racing personality of the year recently for the way she has taken the National Hunt ranks by storm, remarked famously at Kempton on Boxing Day: "I'm on cloud nine and the view is fabulous." Oh, to stay there.

After a dream 12 months, which included winning the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup and the King George VI Chase with Teeton Mill — now clear favourite for the Cheltenham Gold Cup — the woman from deepest Herefordshire is likely to offer up a silent prayer that she continues to have a clear view of racing's peaks during 1999.

At Cheltenham this afternoon, Miss Williams should not have to wait too long to receive a reminder of the thrill which is obtained by sending out a winner at National Hunt racing's headquarters as Lady Rebecca lines up for the Tote Handicap Hurdle (2.10).

The prolific mare has won nine of her 12 starts and is still very much on the upgrade, judged on her demolition of



Zafarabad in a fast time at Cheltenham 20 days ago. That victory was the second around Cheltenham this season and her first success there, back in November, saw her defeat numerous subsequent winners.

Papo Kharisma, trained by the in-form Philip Hobbs, had his winning run ended by Three Farthings at Wincanton on Boxing Day and this represents a jump in class.

Alpine Panther, running in the colours of Peter Savill, chairman of the British Horseracing Board, is on a five-timer, but the Mary Reveley-trained six-year-old must show considerable improvement over a trip arguably short of his best.

The David Nicholson-trained Castle Sweep missed last season and is yet to recapture the form of two years ago, while Romancer, returning to hurdling after disappointing over fences, hails from Nigel Twiston-Davies's yard, which is out of form. All of which should enable **Lady Rebecca** to enhance her impressive record.

With the exception of the Nicky Henderson-trained Katarino, the present crop of juvenile hurdlers this side of the Irish Sea appears nothing out of the ordinary. However, several newcomers make their hurdling debut in the Steel Plate Trial Juvenile Novices' Hurdle (1.35), the first of four races televised by Channel 4, and may offer some clues to the Triumph Hurdle here in March.

Of those with proven form, Dangerus Precedent, winner of three starts for Charlie Egerton, is probably the pick and various form lines give him the beating of Wave Rock, Noble Demand and Mothers Help. However, it would be no surprise to see this race go to a newcomer and **Henry Heald** is a tentative choice.

A winner on the Flat when with Peter Makin, he was rated in the high seventies and is reported to have schooled well since moving to Jim Old's yard.

Susan Nock attempts to rekindle Senor El Betrutti's enthusiasm by equipping the grey with blinkers for the first time in the Unicoin Chase (2.45). However, Northern Starlight looks the logical choice, having made all the running to win the Tripleprint Gold Cup over course and distance 20 days ago for the Pipe-McCoy team. That form received a boost when fourth-placed Dr Leunt trotted up at Kempton on Monday.

However, as one famous punter of yesteryear once remarked, there is no profit to be made from the obvious and **Eirespray**, a strong finisher on the upgrade, is the value choice to floor the likely favourite. Well regarded by his Yorkshire trainer, Sue Smith, he showed typical battling qualities to overhaul Maitre De Musique at Wetherby on Boxing Day and Cheltenham's uphill finish should suit his style of running.

Linden's Lotto landed something of a gamble for Tony Martin's stable when travelling over from Ireland to win around the cross-country course in November and he, at least, has the advantage of having negotiated the unique turning course in the middle of Prestbury Park.

However, he may struggle over the shorter trip offered by the Sporting Index Select Cross Country Chase (3.20), in which he faces classier opposition. Nicholson appears to have found the right opportunity for **Banjo**, who has plummeted down the weights in recent months. Winner of last year's Scottish Grand National, Banjo made an encouraging seasonal reappearance behind Thermal Warrior at Sandown and his chance will increase if the ground becomes genuinely good.

The Miles Gosling Handicap Chase (1.00), run over an extended four miles, is arguably the most interesting race on the card but, somewhat surprisingly, is not covered by Channel 4.

Flaked Oats could be a blot on the handicap judged on his staying-on third behind Royal Barge at Exeter 15 days ago. Paul Nicholls deliberately sidestepped the Welsh National on Monday with his lightly-raced chaser to run here and his patience can pay a handsome dividend.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: Splendid Thyne (3.55 Cheltenham)

With Terry Casey's yard having struck form, Splendid Thyne is fancied to continue the run. The Stayers' Hurdle runner-up, who always needs his first run of the season, is spot on today.

Next best: Flaked Oats (1.00 Cheltenham)

Ayr to inspect again

THE meeting scheduled for Ayr tomorrow hinges on an 8.30 inspection this morning. Mark Kershaw, the clerk of the course, looked at the track yesterday and reported: "Things have improved significantly but there are still some patches which are very wet. The big problem is that more rain is forecast tonight and tomorrow and if that comes it will really put the meeting in jeopardy. But at the same time we have to give things every chance to improve."

There will be an inspection at 7.30 this morning to see if today's Leicester meeting can go ahead. Clerk of the course Nick Lees said: "We could have raced yesterday and I think we will just get away with it provided there isn't any more rain."

CHELTENHAM

THUNDERER
12.30 Kadou Nonantais. 1.00 Flaked Oats. 1.35 Classic Impact. 2.10 Lady Rebecca. 2.45 MR STRONG GALE (nap). 3.20 Linden's Lotto. 3.55 Lord Jim.
Timekeeper's top rating: 1.00 FLAKED OATS.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (GOOD IN PLACES) TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

12.30 BARING BINGHAM NOVICES CHASE (£7,003: 2m 5f) (8 runners)

101 10-111 KADOU NONANTAIS 20 (G,S) (D & G Mercer) D Sherwood 6-11-12 J Osborne
102 311-13 SONG OF THE SWORD 49 (BF,C,F,G) (Lady Lloyd Webber) J Old 6-11-12 G Bradley 113
103 0-0054 DUNNICKS TOWN 20 (F Tucker) F Tucker 7-11-4 S Burrough –
104 51P-24 EISHKEN 44 (BF,S) (P Pottinger) M Bradstock 7-11-4 M A Fitzgerald 79
105 24-16 LORD NOELIE 28 (G) (Executive Racing Club) Miss H Knight 6-11-4 J Culloty –
106 1/P RASHSKIN 14 (G) (B Neary) G Balding 8-11-4 B Fenton –
107 P23-6P WELSH HARVEST 20 (D Williams) D Williams 7-11-4 E Byrne (7) –
108 31300- MAJADOU 226 (S) (C B & R Batterham B) M Pipe 5-10-7 A P McCoy –

BETTING: 4-5 Kadou Nonantais, 7-2 Song Of The Sword, 7-1 Majadou, 8-1 Lord Noelie, 10-1 Eishken, 33-1 others.

1998: MAHLER 6-11-4 C Llewellyn (9-2) N Twiston-Davies 6 ran

Kadou Nonantais beat Carlingford Gale 1l in handicap chase at Lingfield (3m 4f 110yd, soft). Song Of The Sword 22l 3rd of 5 to Spendid in novice chase at Cheltenham (3m 1f, good). Eishken 47l 4th of 8 to Bramblehill Wood in novice chase at Kempton (3m, good to soft). Lord Noelie 31l 6th of 7 to Barton in novice hurdle grade 2 at Sandown (2m 6f, good), previously beat Ross Quay 3l in novice hurdle at Stratford (2m 6f 110yd, good). Rashskin pulled up in novice chase at Lingfield (3m, heavy). Majadou, last form over hurdles in France

KADOU NONANTAIS has taken well to fences and can maintain his unbeaten record

1.00 MILES GOSLING HANDICAP CHASE (£10,445: 4m 1f) (9 runners)

201 1/51P0 SEVEN TOWERS 21 (C,D,G,S) (Mrs E Murray) Mrs M Reveley 10-11-10 P Niven 142
202 F151-3 BARONET 28 (D,F,G,S) (Mrs D Thomson) D Nicholson 9-11-4 A Maguire 141
203 32R-50 HIM OF PRAISE 4 (B,G,S) (M St Quinton) O Sherwood 9-11-0 J Osborne 152
204 F1/1-3 FLAKED OATS 15 (F,G,S) (Exors of Mr E B Swaffield) P Nicholls 10-10-2 J Tizzard
205 4F6-32 DRUID'S BROOK 20 (F,G,S) (Major A Everett) K Bailey 10-10-0 N Williamson 149
206 1212-3 MISS DISKIN 18 (G,S) (M Forrester) R Buckler 10-10-0 B Powell 140
207 P3-U13 LAY IT OFF 32 (F,G,S) (J O'Neill) J O'Neill 10-10-0 R Johnson 127
208 421F31 GOLDEN DRUM 16 (D,S) (McMahon Ltd) J O'Shea 9-10-0 Michael Brennan 126
209 F362-3 DADDY DANCER 22 (F Jones) Mrs P Ford 8-10-0 T J Murphy 83

Long handicap: Miss Diskin 9-9, Lay It Off 8-4, Golden Drum 8-1, Daddy Dancer 7-12.

BETTING: 11-4 Seven Towers, 3-1 Flaked Oats, 6-1 Baronet, Miss Diskin, 9-1 Him Of Praise, Druid's Brook, 16-1 Golden Drum, 14-1 others.

1998: KENDAL CAVALIER 8-10-3 D Salter (7-1) B Millman 10 ran

Seven Towers beaten a distance 7th of 12 to Tamarindo in handicap chase at Cheltenham (3m 1f 110yd, good to soft). Baronet 4½l 3rd of 6 to Thermal Warrior in handicap chase at Sandown (3m 5f 110yd, good), previously beat Eudipe 1½l in 18-runner handicap chase grade 3 at Ayr (4m 1f, good). Him Of Praise 47l 8th of 14 to Kendal Cavalier in handicap chase grade 3 at Chepstow (3m 5f 110yd, soft), previously 39l 5th of 16 to Teeton Mill in handicap chase grade 3 at Newbury (3m 2f 110yd, good to soft) with Seven Towers (2lb better off) pulled up. Flaked Oats 4½l 3rd of 10 to Royal Barge in handicap chase at Exeter (3m 2f, soft). Druid's Brook 17l 2nd of 5 to River Lossie in handicap chase at Lingfield (3m, soft). Miss Diskin 18l 3rd of 7 to Kilmington in handicap chase at Plumpton (3m 1f 110yd, soft). Lay It Off 16l 3rd of 6 to Fightaclaffoes in handicap chase at Folkestone (3m 2f, good to soft). Golden Drum beat Mister Trick neck in 12-runner handicap chase at Bangor (4m 1f, good to soft). Daddy Dancer 11l 3rd of 9 to Name Of Our Father in amateur handicap chase at Ludlow (3m, good to soft), previously beaten a distance 2nd of 23 to Miss Diskin (3lb better off) in handicap chase at Punchestown (3m 1f, heavy) with Lay It Off (5lb worse off) pulled up

FLAKED OATS shaped well on his reappearance and will relish this stamina test

1.35 STEEL PLATE TRIAL JUVENILE NOVICES HURDLE C4
(4-Y-O: £4,691: 2m 1f) (11 runners)

301 21411 DANGERUS PRECEDENT 24 (G,S) (C Brasher) C Egerton 11-12 N Williamson
302 F421 SADLER'S SECRET 18 (B,D,S) (A Helacsi) M Pipe 11-4 A P McCoy 89
303 CLASSIC IMPACT 81F (J Brown & M Blackburn) P Murphy 11-0 M A Fitzgerald –
304 HENRY HEALD 130F (W Sturt) J Old 11-0 T J Murphy –
305 3443 NOBLE DEMAND 14 (BF) (Mrs E Haycock) G Balding 11-0 B Fenton 100
306 25 SADDLERS' ROE 52 (BF) (Ford Farm Racing) D Nicholson 11-0 A Maguire 97
307 622 SHERGANZAR 35 (B) (A Solomou) O Sherwood 11-0 J Osborne 92
308 2322 WAVE ROCK 20 (Earl Cadogan) Miss H Knight 11-0 J Culloty 101
309 F0 ZAPATEADO 75 (M Archer & Miss J Broadhurst) N Twiston-Davies 11-0 C Llewellyn 72
310 323436 ZURYAF 14 (Stanton Sevens) Mrs C Hicks 11-0 J Mogford (7) 89
311 133 MOTHERS HELP 20 (S) (Berkshire Components Ltd) D Williams 10-13 S Durack 89

BETTING: 3-1 Dangerus Precedent, 5-1 Sadler's Secret, 6-1 Sherganzar, 7-1 Henry Heald, 8-1 Wave Rock, Mothers Help, 10-1 Noble Demand, 12-1 others.

1998: KINGDOM EMPEROR 11-4 G Tormey (12-1) W Clay 8 ran

Dangerus Precedent beat Roborant 7l in 9-runner 3yo novice hurdle at Fontwell (2m 2f 110yd, heavy). Sadler's Secret beat Kpolo 16l in 10-runner maiden hurdle at Plumpton (2m 1f, soft). Noble Demand 6l 3rd of 10 to Roborant in 3yo novice hurdle at Lingfield (2m 110yd, heavy) with Zuryaf (levels) 40l 6th. Saddlers' Roe 9l 5th of 12 to Another Bevelled in novice hurdle at Huntingdon (2m 110yd, good to firm). Sherganzar ¾l 2nd of 14 to Traluide in 3yo novice hurdle at Newbury (2m 110yd, good) with Mothers Help (1lb better off) 3¼l 3rd. Wave Rock 18l 2nd of 9 to Hors La Loi in hurdle grade 2 at Lingfield (2m 110yd, soft) with Mothers Help (4lb worse off) 22l 3rd. Zapateado 26l 7th of 12 to Miss Orphan in novice hurdle at Kempton (2m, good to soft).

NOBLE DEMAND is improving and should be suited by this stiff track

2.10 TOTE HANDICAP HURDLE C4
(£10,241: 2m 5f 110yd) (5 runners)

401 338/35 CASTLE SWEEP 13 (G,S) (Lord Vestey) D Nicholson 8-12-0 R Johnson 125
402 11-141 LADY REBECCA 20 (CD,F,G,S) (Kinnersley Opt) Miss V Williams 7-11-6 N Williamson 147
403 01-111 ALPINE PANTHER 18 (G,S) (P Savill) Mrs M Reveley 6-10-6 P Niven 128
404 03/32- ROMANCER 401 (B,G) (M Archer) N Twiston-Davies 8-10-5 C Llewellyn –
405 -11112 PAPO KHARISMA 6 (BF,CD,G,S) (Hedonists) P Hobbs 9-10-0 R Widger (5)

Long handicap: Papo Kharisma 9-13.

BETTING: 11-10 Lady Rebecca, 3-1 Alpine Panther, 7-2 Papo Kharisma, 8-1 Castle Sweep, 12-1 Romancer

1998: PRINCEFUL 7-10-0 R Farrant (6-5 fav) Mrs J Pitman 6 ran

Castle Sweep 63l 5th of 11 to Princeful in hurdle grade 1 at Ascot (3m 1f 110yd, soft), previously 6½l 3rd of 7 to Juyush in hurdle grade 2 at Ascot (2m 4f, good to soft). Lady Rebecca beat Zafarabad 12l in 6-runner hurdle at Cheltenham (2m 4f, good to soft). Alpine Panther beat Flying Gunner ½l in 9-runner handicap hurdle at Bangor (3m, good to soft). Romancer 29l 2nd of 4 to Lake Kariba in novice chase at Chepstow (2m 110yd, soft). Papo Kharisma ¾l 2nd of 6 to Three Farthings in handicap hurdle at Wincanton (2m 6f, soft), previously beat Toby Brown 1½l in 11-runner handicap hurdle at Sandown (2m 6f, good).

LADY REBECCA was impressive here last time and is hard to oppose

2.45 UNICOIN CHASE [SHOWCASE HANDICAP AND TOTE TRIFECTA RACE] (£17,636: 2m 5f) (11 runners) C4

501 P-4F00 SENOR EL BETRUTTI 21 (B,CD,F,G,S) (G Nock) Mrs S Nock 10-11-10 N Williamson 146
502 122-31 NORTHERN STARLIGHT 20 (CD,F,G,S) (A Souch) M Pipe 8-10-13 A P McCoy 158
503 11-P66 MAHLER 34 (CD,G,S) (English Badminton Pnrs) N Twiston-Davies 9-10-12 C Llewellyn 162
504 123-53 PETE THE PARSON 34 (BF,CD,G,S) (W Sturt) J Old 10-10-10 T J Murphy 150
505 1252-P FINE THYNE 34 (D,F,G,S) (P Wiegand) Mrs A Perrett 10-10-9 M A Fitzgerald 136
506 2-1123 MR STRONG GALE 20 (B,F,G,S) (T Chappell) P Nicholls 8-10-7 J Tizzard 157
507 1-5221 EIRESPRAY 6 (G,S) (T Hemmings) Mrs S Smith 8-10-7 (5ex) S Durack 155
508 4-2111 CAPENWRAY 29 (C,D,F,G,S) (B Peppiatt) J King 10-10-2 A Dobbin
509 11P/32 KONVEKTA KING 20 (C,F,G,S) (Konvekta Ltd) O Sherwood 11-10-2 J Osborne 163
510 12P/P- JATHIB 328 (F,G) (Crown Pkg & Mailing Svs Ltd) M Pipe 8-10-0 R Johnson –
511 P4/P-0 GO UNIVERSAL 13 (D,F,G,S) (Universal Conference Ltd) N Chance 11-10-0 B Fenton –

Long handicap: Go Universal 9-13.

BETTING: 4-1 Capenwray, 9-2 Northern Starlight, Eirespray, 6-1 Pete The Parson, Mr Strong Gale, 8-1 Konvekta King, 10-1 Fine Thyne, Mahler, 16-1 Jathib, 25-1 Senor El Betrutti, 33-1 Go Universal.

1998: PETE THE PARSON 9-10-0 M A Fitzgerald (3-1 fav) J Old 6 ran

Senor El Betrutti beaten a distance 8th of 12 to Tamarindo in handicap chase at Cheltenham (3m 1f 110yd, good to soft). Northern Starlight beat Simply Dashing ¾l in 13-runner handicap chase grade 3 at Cheltenham (2m 5f, good to soft) with Mr Strong Gale (8lb better off) 7¼l 3rd. Mahler 56l 6th of 16 to Teeton Mill in handicap chase grade 3 at Newbury (3m 2f 110yd, good to soft) with Fine Thyne (5lb worse off) pulled up. Pete The Parson 15l 3rd of 4 to Green Green Desert in handicap chase at Newbury (2m 1f, soft). Eirespray beat Maitre De Musique 3l in 6-runner handicap chase at Wetherby (2m 4f 110yd, good to soft). Capenwray beat Ballylone 12l in handicap chase at Leicester (2m 4f 110yd, good). Konvekta King neck 2nd to Barnageera Boy in handicap chase at Haydock (2m, soft). Go Universal 61l 11th to Windross in novice hurdle at Warwick (2m 3f, soft)

EIRESPRAY won in good style at Wetherby and can defy a 5lb penalty

3.20 SPORTING INDEX SELECT CROSS COUNTRY CHASE (£8,440: 3m 1f) (6 runners) C4

601 F0-12R COURT MELODY 21 (B,G,S) (M Coburn) P Nicholls 11-11-11 J Tizzard 147
602 60F-44 BANJO 28 (C,D,F,G,S) (D Mercer) D Nicholson 9-11-8 R Johnson
603 1-22P2 CAVALERO 30 (BF,CD,F,G,S) (H Manners) H Manners 10-11-8 Mr A Charles-Jones 129
604 5P-361 LINDEN'S LOTTO 49 (C,D,F,G,S) (M Bailey) A J Martin (Ire) 10-11-8 A Maguire 139
605 3322-4 FAMFONI 131 (The Propellers Partnership) K Bailey 6-10-7 N Williamson –
606 -53504 GALE AHEAD 22 (D,F,G) (Mrs T Pritchard) Dr P Pritchard 9-10-7 Dr P Pritchard 78

BETTING: 7-4 Banjo, 5-2 Linden's Lotto, 3-1 Court Melody, 7-1 Famfoni, 10-1 Cavalero, 50-1 Gale Ahead

1998: MCGREGOR THE THIRD 12-11-8 B Harding (6-4 jt fav) G Richards 6 ran

Court Melody refused in handicap chase at Cheltenham (3m 1f 110yd, good to soft), previously 11l 2nd of 4 to The Toiseach in handicap chase at Ascot (3m 110yd, good). Banjo 15l 4th of 6 to Thermal Warrior in handicap chase at Sandown (3m 5f 110yd, good). Cavalero 4l 2nd of 4 to Whippers Delight in amateur handicap chase at Plumpton (3m 1f 110yd, good to soft). Linden's Lotto beat Fiftysevenchannels 5l in cross country at Cheltenham (3m 7f, good). Famfoni distance 4th to Chamberlin De Sove in chase at Nort-sur-erdre (2m 5f, good). Gale Ahead 13l 4th of 9 to Name Of Our Father in amateur handicap chase at Ludlow (3m, good to soft).

CAVALERO is usually an excellent jumper and should take to these fences

3.55 UNICOIN HOMES SPA HURDLE
(£6,775: 3m 110yd) (4 runners)

1 111- LORD JIM 156F (CD,G,S) (Mrs S Thomas) J Old 7-11-12 T J Murphy 135
2 -12213 OCEAN HAWK 13 (D,F,G,S) (M Archer) N Twiston-Davies 7-11-12 C Llewellyn
3 1454/0 SILVER WEDGE 55 (C,G,S) (W Robins) N Henderson 8-11-0 M A Fitzgerald 116
4 1112-P SPLENDID THYNE 55 (S) (J Galvanoni) T Casey 7-11-0 W Marston 138

BETTING: 2-1 Splendid Thyne, 5-2 Ocean Hawk, 3-1 Silver Wedge, 7-2 Lord Jim.

1998: MIGHTY MOSS 7-11-4 Mr F Hutsby (11-4 fav) D Nicholson 5 ran

Lord Jim beat Easy Feelin neck in 6-runner hurdle at Sandown (3m 6f, soft). Ocean Hawk 31l 3rd of 11 to Princeful in hurdle grade 1 at Ascot (3m 1f 110yd, soft), previously beat Tiraldo 4l in 7-runner novice chase grade 2 at Worcester (2m 7f 110yd, heavy). Silver Wedge 43l 8th of 10 to Mister Morose in handicap hurdle at Chepstow (2m 4f 110yd, good to soft) with Splendid Thyne (2lb better off) pulled up.

LORD JIM, in good form on the Flat last summer, can make a winning return to hurdles

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Wins	Rnrs	%
Miss V Williams	8	26	30.8	A McCoy	41	159	25.8
O Sherwood	11	58	19.0	N Williamson	35	168	20.8
K Bailey	15	90	16.7	J Osborne	31	151	20.5
J King	5	30	16.7	A Maguire	25	171	14.6
D Nicholson	36	232	15.5	T J Murphy	6	47	12.8
C Egerton	4	28	14.3	C Llewellyn	20	157	12.7

Sharpical out

SHARPICAL will not attempt to atone for last season's slightly unlucky defeat in the Ladbroke Hurdle, a week tomorrow. The gelding, who made a bad mistake at the final flight when sixth in the Leopardstown feature last season, will instead be aimed at a repeat victory in the Tote Gold Trophy.

He has not run since winning the Newbury contest last February, and his trainer, Nicky Henderson, reported: "Sharpical is not quite ready."



THUNDERER
12.50 Meldrum Park. 1.20 King's Hussar. 1.55 Sister Gale. 2.25 Soldier Mak. 2.55 Damza. 3.30 Rajati.

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

12.50 MOTHER GOOSE NOVICES HURDLE
(£2,500: 2m 3f) (17 runners)

1 2311 RUSSIAN ASPECT 6 (C,G,S) M W Easterby 5-12-5 Mr K R O'Ryan (7)
2 3-12 MAJOR SPONSOR 6 (BF,G,S) G M Moore 7-11-12 N Horrocks (7)
3 4132 MELDRUM PARK 15 (CD,F) F Murphy 6-11-7 Mr J P McNamara (5)
4 4 CORPORATION POP 84 (BF) J Jefferson 5-11-5 L Wyer
5 P- FARHAN 370 K Morgan 5-11-5 Mr R Forristal (7)
6 2420 FORMIDABLE PARTNER 34 Mrs V Ward 6-11-5 R Bellamy
7 556P HELMSLEY FLIER 6 T Easterby 5-11-5 R McGrath
8 4/FS MAJOR HAGE 20 J Howard Johnson 8-11-5 D Parker
9 30 NOBLE HYMN 37 J Howard Johnson 6-11-5 C McCormack (3)
10 4/0- SALMON CELLAR 326 N Richards 6-11-5 B Harding
11 04-0 SERENADE 34 (V) P Spottiswood 5-11-5 S Taylor
12 6-06 SILVER HOWE 17 D Moffatt 6-11-5 D J Moffatt
13 0 BABY GEE 25 D Williams 5-11-0 B Storey
14 6/3- FINAL SCORE 271P F Murphy 8-11-0 I Jardine (7)
15 /P-0 LISBAND LADY 15 Mrs S Smith 9-11-0 S Pointer (7)
16 THE GREY BAY Mrs M Reveley 7-11-0 G Lee
17 5500 EDDIE ROMBO 41 R Woodhouse 4-10-6 B Grattan (5)

3-1 Major Sponsor, 7-2 Russian Aspect, 5-1 Meldrum Park, 10-1 others.

1.20 CINDERELLA JUVENILE NOVICES SELLING HURDLE (4-Y-O: £1,646: 2m) (13)

1 33U0 BOLD LEGACY 21 (V) R Ford 10-12 N Horrocks (5)
2 05 HAPPY DAYS 18 D Moffatt 10-12 D J Moffatt
3 30 I'M TEF 22 T Easterby 10-12 L Wyer
4 U440 JAGO 22 (B) M W Easterby 10-12 F Leahy
5 4 KING'S HUSSAR 18 (V,BF) G M Moore 10-12 N Hannity (7)
6 PP MOON QUEST 22 K Morgan 10-12 Mr R Forristal (7)
7 SLIM PRIOR 239F D Williams 10-12 B Harding
8 4503 WYNBURY FLYER 18 F Murphy 10-12 Mr J P McNamara (5)
9 DOUBLIN' BAY 128F N Mason 10-7 K Johnson
10 0 FORMER LOVE 13 T Donnelly 10-7 M H Naughton (5)
11 4443 HELENES HILL 13 (BF) J L Harris 10-7 T O'Hara
12 66P HIDING PLACE 18 W Storey 10-7 R McGrath
13 00F MEAFORD MAGIC 21 J Mackie 10-7 E Husband

6-2 Helenes Hill, 7-2 I'm Tef, 5-1 King's Hussar, 6-1 Wynbury Flyer, 8-1 Jago, 12-1 Hiding Place, 16-1 Bold Legacy, 20-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: A Streeter, 8 winners from 25 runners, 32.0%; T Easterby, 10 from 37, 27.0%; K Morgan, 10 from 47, 21.3%; Mrs M Reveley, 24 from 114, 21.1%; L Lungo, 9 from 58, 15.5%; J Jefferson, 3 from 20, 15.0%.
JOCKEYS: T Eley, 5 winners from 27 rides, 18.5%; R Guest, 12 from 67, 17.9%; N Horrocks, 6 from 39, 15.4%; R Supple, 9 from 71, 12.7%; L Wyer, 10 from 83, 12.0%.

1.55 ROBINSON CRUSOE MAIDEN CHASE
(£2,814: 3m 1f 110yd) (16)

1 55-P BARRISTERS BOY 45 R Woodhouse 9-11-5 S Taylor
2 53P0 CHIEF CHIPPIE 29 (B) W Kemp 6-11-5 D Bentley
3 U-06 DESPERATE DAYS 15 (B,S) F Kirby 10-11-5 I Supple
4 644- FORREST TRIBE 263 (S) M Hammond 6-11-5 B Harding
5 -0PP HOWYOUDOING 18 S Kettlewell 9-11-5 Mr A Evans (7)
6 /P35 JORIDI LE FORIGE 6 (B,BF) F Murphy 8-11-5 Mr J P McNamara (5)
7 6/62 MONSIEUR DARCY 25 J Adam 8-11-5 B Storey
8 4606 PERKS OF THE JOB 16 F Murtagh 7-11-5 R McGrath
9 02-P RYE RUM 15 J Aynsley 8-11-5 D Parker
10 FP0P SEABURN 6 N Mason 9-11-5 K Johnson
11 20F8 THE OTHER HALF 6 L Lungo 7-11-5 R Supple
12 -00-0 TOM'S RIVER 43 (S) Mrs M Reveley 7-11-5 Mr A Dempsey (3)
13 F062 UP AND OVER 43 (S) R Tate 6-11-5 Mrs F Needham
14 /50/ OLD BETSY 701 Mrs S Smith 9-11-0 D J Moffatt
15 PFP5 POLITICAL MANDATE 32 R Nixon 6-11-0 C McCormack (3)
16 2-84 SISTER GALE 18 (G) Mrs S Smith 7-11-0 G F Ryan (3)

3-1 Forrest Tribe, 7-2 Joridi Le Forige, 5-1 Monsieur Darcy, 6-1 Sister Gale, 7-1 Up And Over, 12-1 Rye Rum, 14-1 The Other Half, 20-1 others.

2.25 JACK AND THE BEANSTALK HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,775: 2m) (6)

1 3313 COUNTRY ORCHID 36 (D,F,G,S) Mrs M Reveley 8-11-10 M H Naughton (5)
2 0251 CUMBRIAN MAESTRO 15 (B,CD,G,S) T Easterby 6-11-2 L Wyer
3 -35PP ALPINE HIDEAWAY 16 (D,F) M W Easterby 6-11-0 Mr K R O'Ryan (7)
4 132/ KINTAM 133F (BF,D,G,S) T Donnelly 9-10-9 B Storey
5 -216 SOLDIER MAK 13 (C,D,G) J Mackie 6-10-8 E Husband
6 -F21 MARIBLIANO 20 (D,S) K Morgan 6-10-1 Mr R Forristal (7)

9-4 Cumbrian Maestro, 11-4 Country Orchid, 5-1 Soldier Mak, 13-2 others.

2.55 HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSON HANDICAP CHASE (£4,825: 2m) (7)

1 2530 GOLDEN HELLO 21 (D,F,G,S) T Easterby 8-12-0 L Wyer
2 3-56 MONYMAN 21 (BF,CD,F,G) M Hammond 9-11-12 B Harding
3 3U44 POLITICAL TOWER 17 (CD,G) R Nixon 12-11-6 C McCormack (3)
4 221P BATTERY FIRED 69 (G) N Mason 10-10-10 R Guest
5 2F5F COURT KARMUSKI 15 (BF,D,S) F Murphy 7-10-8 Mr J P McNamara (5)
6 4611 DAMZA 15 (CD,F,G) N Mason 7-10-6 K Johnson
7 P41F MOSS PAGEANT 20 (D,G,S) J B Walton 9-10-4 B Storey

5-2 Court Karmuski, 3-1 Damza, 6-1 Monyman, 13-2 Political Tower, 7-1 others.

3.30 PETER PIPER NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,024: 2m) (14)

1 0411 RAJATI 18 (D,G,S) A Streeter 4-11-10 T Eley
2 -352 SQUANDAMANIA 21 J Norton 5-11-7 D Byrne
3 0-05 HIBERNATE 16 J Howard Johnson 5-11-6 D Parker
4 3144 MARSH MARIGOLD 32 (D,S) G Ferro 5-11-6 Mr J P McNamara (5)
5 54-0 CHAIN LINE 10 J Wade 8-11-5 R McGrath
6 50-0 THE ROUNDSILLS 31 M Mullineaux 5-11-6 Gary Lyons
7 0640 GAELIC PROBE 18 M Bielby 5-11-5 C McCormack (3)
8 0-84 MUHASSIL 13 K Morgan 6-11-3 Mr R Forristal (7)
9 F6PP KING'S COUNTRY 41 W Mason 7-11-1 K Johnson
10 -004 JONA HOLLEY 16 M Hammond 6-10-12 B Harding
11 40-P DIG FOR GOLD 6 R Woodhouse 6-10-11 B Grattan (5)
12 0006 SHE'S ALL HEART 18 L Lungo 6-10-9 R Supple
13 04-0 CANADIAN FANTASY 15 Mrs V Ward 5-10-4 R Bellamy
14 /006 FIRST GOLD 16 A Smith 10-10-0 B Storey

3-1 Rajati, 9-2 Squandamania, 6-1 Marsh Marigold, Jona Holley, 10-1 others.



THUNDERER
12.40 Norski Lad. 1.10 Breteche. 1.40 Holdimclose. 2.10 Saxon Duke. 2.40 Native Fling. 3.10 Handy Lass. 3.40 Selberry.

GOING: HEAVY (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

12.40 HAPPY NEW YEAR JUVENILE NOVICES HURDLE (4-Y-O: £2,394: 2m 1f 110yd) (10 runners)

1 5000 ALLEGIANCE 13 (B,D,G) P Wegmann 11-4 D Matthews 51
2 6P16 ANOTHER BEVELED 41 (F) A P Jones 11-4 B Clifford
3 DASHING CHIEF 123F R Frost 10-12 J Frost –
4 DOUBLET 92F M Pipe 10-12 R Greene –
5 6 LAFFAH 13 M Pipe 10-12 C Durham (7) 40
6 NORSKI LAD 70F P Nicholls 10-12 R Dunwoody –
7 NUIT D'OR 266F W G M Turner 10-12 J Power (7) –
8 P RED RISK 29 S Knight 10-12 V Slattery –
9 TREVERRICK 171F T George 10-12 S Wynne –
10 CRYSTAL CRAZE 107F P Bowen 10-7 L Cummins (3) –

13-8 Norski Lad, 7-2 Doublet, 5-1 Another Beveled, 8-1 Dashing Chief, Treverrick, 10-1 Laffah, 16-1 Nuit D'Or, 33-1 others.

1.10 KENNFORD SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (£1,716: 2m 1f 110yd) (9)

1 6661 SPIRIT LEVEL 15 (C,F,S) J R Payne 11-11-10 Mr D O'Meara (7)
2 0052 SUMMER FLOWER 15 (D,S) Miss Z Dawson 9-11-9 DOUBTFUL 74
3 2F06 BRETECHE 13 (V) M Pipe 4-11-8 R Greene 64
4 300P FEARLESS WONDER 15 (S) H Howe 8-11-4 Miss K Di Marte (7) 76
5 0UP- VISCOUNT TULLY 274 (G,S) C Jackson 14-10-12 R Dunwoody 77
6 -00P COEUR BATTANT 28 (C,D,F,S) R Baker 9-10-12 V Slattery 48
7 000- KARACHI 226 R Frost 9-10-11 J Frost 53
8 0-00 SANDANTE 31 R Buckler 8-10-10 D O'Sullivan (7) 61
9 2-00 PARISIAN 29 M Bradstock 14-10-9 R Studholme (5) 61

7-4 Spirit Level, 5-2 Breteche, 6-1 Viscount Tully, 8-1 Coeur Battant, 10-1 Fearless Wonder, Karachi, 14-1 others.

1.40 THURLESTONE HOTEL NOVICES CHASE (£3,157: 2m 7f 110yd) (10)

1 11-3 ALBERMARLE 51 (F,G,S) H Daly 8-11-10 R Dunwoody
2 -4PP CAPTAIN MORRIS 8 P Wegmann 7-11-4 D Matthews –
3 -344 CLIFTON GAME 36 R Alner 9-11-4 D Salter (3) 89
4 0032 DIVINE CHANCE 15 (G,S) M Churches 11-11-4 Mr J Young (7) 44
5 4-92 HOLDIMCLOSE 42 (F,S) R Frost 9-11-4 J Frost 97
6 4330 MELLING 17 (G) R Hodges 8-11-4 J Harris (5) 83
7 P-54 DUNNICKS COUNTRY 28 C Tizzard 9-10-13 C Maude 85
8 P3/P MILES MORE FUN 15 (G,S) M Hill 10-10-13 V Slattery –
9 11-F PENGUIN 15 (S) Mrs S Mester-Bennetts 8-10-13 J R Kavanagh –
10 312/ SWANSEA GOLD 595 (G,S) P Hobbs 8-10-13 Mr D O'Meara (7) –

11-4 Holdimclose, 7-2 Clifton Game, 9-2 Albermarle, 5-1 Penguin, 8-1 Swansea Gold, 12-1 Divine Chance, 14-1 Melling, Dunnicks Country, 25-1 others.

2.10 THURLESTONE HOTEL HANDICAP CHASE
(£3,038: 2m 7f 110yd) (9)

1 07/4 PALCSANTO 15 (F,G,S) M Pipe 9-11-10 R Greene –
2 1-PP HOLD YOUR RANKS 15 (S) R Frost 12-11-5 J Frost 95
3 F-F2 DANCETILLYOUDROP 39 (S) P Nicholls 8-11-3 C Maude 113
4 22F2 SAXON DUKE 15 (B,CD,G,S) P Hobbs 8-11-2 R Dunwoody 117
5 PP-0 MAURACHAS 17 (D,G,S) M Sheppard 9-11-0 G Upton 105
6 UF/P ROCKY PARK 15 (S) G Balding 13-10-10 F Kenny (7) –
7 F2-P GLACIAL KING 63 (G) K Bishop 7-10-5 J R Kavanagh
8 3-P3 SPACE CAPPA 3 (G,S) Miss V Stephens 11-10-1 Miss V Stephens 110
9 /046 TREMPLIN 15 N Hawke 8-10-0 S Wynne 34

13-8 Saxon Duke, 9-2 Dancetillyoudrop, 11-2 Palcsanto, 8-1 Rocky Park, 10-1 others.

2.40 DEVON AIR AMBULANCE NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (£2,377: 2m 1f 110yd) (8)

1 /131 NATIVE FLING 17 (D,S) P Hobbs 7-12-0 R Dunwoody 99
2 3P0- CAWARRA BOY 262 (D,S) E L James 11-11-10 J R Kavanagh 89
3 -238 GO GO HENRY 22 (S) R Alner 7-11-6 J Frost 85
4 35-4 DOVETTO 16 (S) C J Price 10-10-8 L Cummins (3) –
5 -PP4 MR POPPLETON 14 (F) R Brotherton 10-10-4 C Maude
6 3/0- SGT CHILDCRAFT 238 B Millman 9-10-0 D Salter (3) –
7 -242 LYPHARD'S FABLE 14 (S) T George 8-10-0 S Wynne 94
8 56/U CREDO BOY 17 (S) K Bishop 10-10-0 R Greene –

6-4 Native Fling, 9-2 Go Go Henry, 6-1 Dovetto, 13-2 Lyphard's Fable, 7-1 Cawarra Boy, 8-1 Mr Poppleton, 20-1 Sgt Childcraft, Credo Boy.

3.10 LEVY BOARD HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,495: 2m 3f 110yd) (9)

1 145- TUSCANY HIGHWAY 302 (S) P Hobbs 10-11-12 R Dunwoody 77
2 4-21 HANDY LASS 14 (C,D,F,G,S) J Smith 10-11-2 M Griffiths (5) 91
3 36-2 KENTFORD TINA 15 (G) J Mullins 8-11-1 B Clifford 106
4 5054 KHALIDI 13 (F,G,S) D Gandolfo 10-10-9 Sophie Mitchell 97
5 12-6 SUNRISE SPECIAL 13 (CD,S) P Rodford 6-10-8 S Burrough 107
6 530- EHTEFAAL 379 (F,G) J King 8-10-7 L Cummins (3) –
7 10P- GENTLEMAN JIM 316 (G) N Hawke 9-10-0 C Maude –
8 -5U2 BLUE BLAZER 31 (S) R Frost 9-10-0 T O'Connor (7)
9 P-15 WHITEBONNET 31 (B,G,S) C Jackson 9-10-0 Miss S Jackson 108

9-4 Handy Lass, 4-1 Kentford Tina, 5-1 Tuscany Highway, 7-1 Khalidi, 8-1 others.

3.40 RACING CHANNEL NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (£1,942: 2m 1f 110yd) (7)

1 0111 SELBERRY 6 (CD,G,S) E L James 5-12-2 (6ex) J R Kavanagh 58
2 5504 ORIENTAL STYLE 15 (V) G Balding 5-10-9 F Keniry (7) 53
3 -F6P SANDORAN 4 M Hill 6-10-3 D Salter (3) 66
4 -030 LUSCOMBE 27 P Jones 8-10-1 P Ryan (7) 41
5 0-00 NATIVE TANGO 108 M Campion 8-10-0 C Maude 40
6 -56F VEILED DANCER 42 R Frost 6-10-0 Mr A Holdsworth 85
7 /335 ANOTHER CHANCER 32 (G) D Gandolfo 8-10-0 S Wynne

8-13 Selberry, 6-1 Oriental Style, 13-1 Luscombe, Veiled Dancer, 12-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: M Pipe, 69 winners from 281 runners, 24.6%; P Hobbs, 33 from 152, 21.7%; B Millman, 9 from 52, 17.3%; P Nicholls, 6 from 41, 14.6%; R Alner, 13 from 93, 14.0%; A P Jones, 3 from 22, 13.6%.
JOCKEYS: R Dunwoody, 37 winners from 119 rides, 31.1%; S Wynne, 4 from 14, 28.6%; C Maude, 17 from 95, 17.9%; P Holley, 10 from 69, 14.5%; J Frost, 19 from 144, 13.2%; D Salter, 9 from 80, 11.3%.

Mixing business with pupils

Children in education action zones benefit from private-sector funds and ideas, reports Charles Rigby



School's out: children as young as nine are being temporarily removed from the system to be given confidence-building life skills

Everyone said that the Government had run out of ideas for turning around failing schools. But civil servants appear to have had a sudden spurt of inspiration: the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) is investing £1 million in deprived areas, to be managed and spent using a strict business model.

At last, a radical attempt at educational regeneration — suspension of the curriculum and new teaching methods — is being made. So, as a businessman, I joined up to work in Grimsby Education Action Zone (EAZ), spent months persuading the local education authority (entrenched old Labour) of my bona fides and ended up sitting opposite Jeremy Paxman on *Newsnight*.

"How much money are you putting in?" he asked me outright, before even knowing my name. Twice I squirmed and twice he repeated the question until he got my reply: £50,000.

Some might wonder what we business people were letting ourselves in for. The Education Minister asks you for generous help, measures your gift, then tells you it's not enough. But we in Grimsby have some good ideas. Getting jobs for a dozen truants would have a significant impact on Grimsby's unemployment statistics. We think we can turn them into well-motivated and responsible citizens without their going anywhere near a classroom, and get them a job afterwards. The trick is to take them out of their normal surroundings for a short residential course, which they pay for partly out of money they have to raise themselves.

The World Challenge Social Exclusion Project in Grimsby may be one of the most radical in England, yet the DfEE does not even produce a newsletter to share good ideas between the 12 EAZs.

We are removing children as young as nine from the system — temporarily, at first — to give them life skills outside the classroom. They undertake expeditions and programmes away from home, developing self-esteem, confidence, initiative and discipline. It is a cheap way of letting them learn and enjoy life; it simultaneously also makes them more employable. They will undertake social and community projects, outdoor activities and team-building exercises, something that Ofsted-measured examination results could possibly take into account. They are taught to communicate, to tolerate, to negotiate — in short, to manage.

All this will cost 10 per cent of the EAZ budget because part of the programme will teach disaffected children to make and save money, thus subsidising their own extracurricular education and keeping them off the streets.

An attractive part of the programme is that once underperforming pupils restore their own self-esteem, they may return to school and acquire some academic qualifications to add to their personal training. Not a bad idea, and one we would like to replicate nationally. But when I told Estelle Morris, the School Standards Minister, about it, there was something in the eye that hovered between incomprehension and disbelief. When I said it was free because the truants have to pay their own way, her reaction seemed confused: how could anybody have an idea that does not require government funding?

Soon, too, schools in the zone will have a comprehensive range of IT equipment and expertise for their children, as well as mentoring and out-of-school counselling for children who apparently have nothing to live for. Heads, local government, businesses and parents will have new hope, made possible by an exciting new set of skills, provided the Treasury does not torpedo a programme costing a mere £18 million, compared with a strategic regeneration budget of £450 million.

Whenever an idea is mooted in Grimsby, the cost, not the value is so heavily scrutinised that the Government appears to be a reluctant paymaster. When our IT business partner set about networking every home in the zone, all the DfEE could do was to query the cost of equipment.

There is no doubt that the Government wants a partnership between our local authority, businesses and educators to work. If you ask people — who, to remain in business, have to be successful — to come up with a good idea to tackle a particular problem, this is what they will do.

But they have to be given the freedom to make it work. I have now been told that I am no longer a director of Grimsby action zone; I am a trustee and it is a charity. So I am personally liable for its success. But our good ideas remain audited by the Treasury and are flourishing only in a deprived corner of Humberside.

EAZs must avoid repeating the mistakes of LEAs. The zones must be doggedly radical if they are to excel, and I am sure that in time all this will change, that the good ideas will be valued for their true and minimal cost.

They had better, or here is one businessman who will think he has wasted his time and money.

● *The author is chairman of World Challenge Expeditions and a director of the North-East Lincolnshire Education Action Zone.*

What will you sign up to learn in 1999?

John O'Leary

Resolutions are to the modern new year what the White Heather Club was to last night's television schedules: a previously unavoidable part of the annual celebrations that has fallen into disuse. Many barely outlasted the Hogmanay hangover, but at least they forced us to consider, however briefly, a little self-improvement.

Two adult education organisations are this week trying to revive the practice to begin to make a reality of the Government's desire to promote lifelong learning. They face an uphill struggle, if the Campaign for Learning's attempt to prise resolutions from celebrities is anything to go by. The pledges range from the bizarre (Michael Fish learning to play the drums) to the banal (Lord Puttnam learning to send e-mail). Tony Blair is playing safe with "learning to be more proficient on the computer".

The most striking thing about the collection, however, is the number of people associated with the Government's educational agenda who are apparently too knowledgeable or busy to want to learn anything new. Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, for example, intends to learn to be "more assertive and forthright" in his communications, while Doug McAvoy, the general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, says he is seeking a psychology course "to understand better the reasons for otherwise intelligent politicians being addicted to unfair criticism of teachers".

Both may be amusing to those in the know, but they hardly set an example to the rest of us.

Using celebrities to promote government policies has become a tedious substitute for something new to say, often when an initiative is being announced for the second or third time. But in this case, role models are precisely what is required, because most people have yet to grasp what exactly is meant by lifelong learning.

Like the "learning society", lifelong learning is still more of a slogan than a reality. Is it a snappier term for adult education or something more closely associated with work?

If the concept is to have the impact desired by the Government it must, of course, be both. David Blunkett said last month: "Learning must be at the heart of our ambitions. I want to build a learning culture, starting, of course, with our children. A culture in which lifelong learning becomes a reality for everyone, at every age. It is the key to our prosperity and the key for people to unlock their potential."

Adult education has long since outgrown the popular image of basket-weaving and flower-arranging, although both still have a loyal constituency. The £9 million boost announced by the Government in October had more to do with cyber-cafés and family learning schemes. The University for Industry should bring more learning activity to the workplace.

Lifelong learning is still more of a slogan than a reality

The Sign Up Again campaign, which begins in earnest on Monday, is focusing particularly on men and the over-50s as groups under-represented in adult education. A study commissioned for the campaign found that many men — especially those with few qualifications — thought that adult learning was for women. But, compared with other nations, particularly Scandinavian, both sexes in Britain are quick to abandon full-time education and reluctant to return in a part-time capacity.

The Government is playing its part today with a £50 million pledge to develop a national advice and guidance service for adult learners. Baroness Blackstone said that high-quality information was essential if people were to make the right choices of course and career. "We have," she added, "a clear vision of a learning society in which everyone routinely expects to learn and continually upgrade their skills."

An initial manifestation of this commitment is the Learning Direct helpline on 0800-100 900, which has provided confidential advice to 400,000 people since its launch last February. Local networks will link to it, using a computerised database of courses.

Generation Soundbite

Pupils no longer have patient research and study skills, says Duncan Baxter

Even in these days of computer-generated reports, some pupils probably still encounter the traditional comments "Must concentrate more" and "Daydreams too much". But how far is that quality of concentration, the ability to focus the mind, valued today?

In our soundbite culture, politicians will give a phrase sufficient spin to make it circle around the airwaves and newspaper headlines for just long enough and advertisers will present not just the jingle but the visual image or joke, so that we remember their product.

At school I have noticed that assemblies in chapel have moved away from the ten-minute "thought for the day" nugget of finely honed prose, into an all-singing, all-dancing presentation at which a videotape is invariably produced. Academic lessons are expected to be more theatrical. School inspectors and professional tutors all talk about pace, and not following the same activity for too long: in short, arresting the attention of youngsters through variety.

We are used to ease now, and rightly so. The Internet has revolutionised the research process. Painstaking information-gathering is not always necessary: computers can do in seconds and minutes what used to take months. Parents will scream at me: "But my children spend hours at the computer." True, but they will be more likely to put into practice the character of the magpie than the painstaking research skills of the scholar. They will be flicking between pieces of information on the Internet just as easily as they hop between TV channels. As parents and teachers in the age of the soundbite, can we really abdicate responsibility for the consequences for the way our children think? A beautifully constructed summary presupposes the writer has gone through an original text, has understood the argument and has proved it.

But even in some sixth-form subjects, pupils do not have to write essays. Even the structure of an answer is given in some examination questions these days because an essay is a test or an investigation. The ability to argue a case, to see illogicality and plain untruth in someone else's argument, is a fundamental skill, which is why writing an essay and learning the art of debate are two of the fundamental exercises of the mind. The length of examinations, too, in a modular system of assessment, militates against extended analysis and scholarly argument. An exam lasting up to an hour and a half at A level does not allow enough time for developed answers. Having to rethink the whole concept of an essay has become the key imperative of the modular examination. I cannot help but feel that if information is more easily obtainable and the old art of hunting facts is not so necessary, then what we ask students to do with this information should be more, not less, rigorous than in the past.

Nowadays, I find myself advising exam candidates about how important it is to become used to sitting in one place, as in an exam. I look with horror at pupils coming out of summer exams looking shattered because their bodies have not had the opportunity to move.

Recently, the clarion call from our politicians has been "standards, not structures". But structures (everything from how we teach to what we ask pupils to write and the length of time we give them for it) have an impact on the ethos of what we are doing.

I rejoice that pupils have access to global information more quickly than I did, but parents and pupils have a harder time than ever in making students understand the need for patient and lengthy study. May examiners remember, however, the mental rigours behind true study.

● *The author is Headmaster of Kingston Grammar School.*

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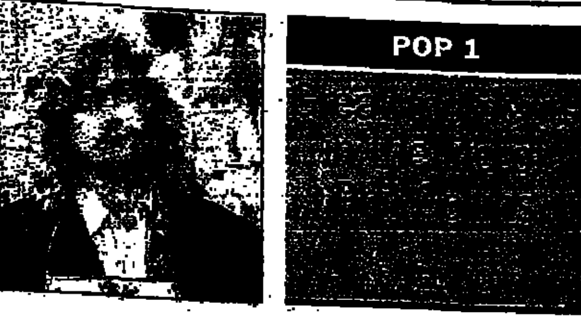
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POP 1

THE TIMES ARTS

POP 2

Beth Orton: one to watch in 1999

PAGE 31




We went through all this a century ago

Kenneth Tynan, with typical swagger, once defined critics as people "who know the way but can't drive the car". Well, it's a point of view — though I fear that if artists and performers started asking critics for directions the Car of Culture would be pranged into the Ditch of Debacle before you could say "oh Calcutta".

But if a critic isn't going to pretend to "know the way" on New Year's Day — especially at the start of this Year of Living Millennially — then he never will. So, as you wait for the ritual four aspirins to soothe the throb in your morning-after cranium, let me divert you with a little Janus-like reflection.

Two things strike me about the cultural revolution of the 1990s. The first is that it *is* a revolution. Satellite, cable, digital and now interactive television, the home computer and the Internet — all these have changed leisure habits irrevocably, especially among the under-30s. Sorting out the implications will be the biggest task facing cultural mandarins and showbiz moguls alike in the next decade. That is, if they want to keep their jobs. Already you can sense the panic and the fear as the big entertainment corporations scramble frantically to "police" the Net.

That's not surprising. To many people over 40 the pace of this huge technological upheaval is bewildering. The silicon merry-go-round whirls ever faster, but what's it got to do with real life? And what will become of "real" culture — live music, fine books, good conversation — when a little square screen defines our intellectual horizons?

These are commonly expressed worries. So let me make a second, slightly more consoling point. The world has seen all this before. Indeed, there are curious parallels between the cultural mood of the 1990s and the 1890s.

Consider this. In the 1890s, too, ordinary lives underwent a bewildering technological metamorphosis. Much of it was due to electricity, which (like the Internet in our era) had been kicking around academic circles for years, but was suddenly harnessed by inventors of genius in ways that transformed day-to-day existence.

Electric cookers, toasters and kettles all appeared in the 1890s; the vacuum cleaner in 1901. Telephone subscriber dialling was invented in 1896: *nine years later Britain had* half a million telephones. Marconi sent a radio signal pinging across the Channel in 1898; and Ford built his first petrol-driven car in 1893.

As Wordsworth might have written, to be young in that decade must have been very heaven. But to be middle-aged must have been alarming. "Sir, I have tested your machine," Sir Herbert Beerbohm wrote to the maker of another 1890s "fad", the gramophone. "It adds new terror to life and makes death a long-felt want."

So a hundred years ago we find much the same technological generation-gap as exists today. But there is an even more pertinent observation to be made about that decade: almost nobody came close to predicting the Big Bang in mass

WEEK IN THE ARTS



RICHARD MORRISON

entertainment that electricity would bring. That wasn't for want of prophecy: after all, H.G.Wells wrote his best sci-fi yarns in the 1890s. But who could foresee how the Lumière brothers' flickering experiments with moving pictures in a little Paris room would spawn the biggest entertainment industry in history within 15 years? Or how Marconi's cross-Channel bleeps would lead, just two decades later, to symphonies and speeches being heard in a million homes at once?

We stand in much the same relationship to computer science today as those late Victorians stood to *electricity. We know we have a* powerful new cultural tool, but we delude ourselves if we think we have even the foggiest notion of what wondrous new modes of expression it may spawn. All we can sense is that somewhere, perhaps not yet born, there is a genius who will shape this new medium into a form capable of stirring profound emotions — just as Hollywood's brilliant pioneers quickly evolved "truth 24 times a second" (in Jean-Luc Godard's phrase) out of the Lumières' primitive shadow-play.

But what of the fear that the "living arts" will wither, as the home-entertainment revolution nurtures a generation of couch-nerds? Again, I take comfort from history. When cinema arrived, pessimists said it would kill live theatre; just as the gramophone would kill live music. Similarly, television was expected to kill cinema. "Why should people pay good money to see bad films when they can see bad television for nothing?" Sam Goldwyn *asked gloomily in 1956.*

Yet all survived. The truth is that old art forms rarely die; they merely fade into repeat-mode. Original expression becomes harder and harder; the temptation to refer continually back to a heritage of proven masterpieces, like Orpheus fatally glancing back at Eurydice, becomes ever stronger.

You can see this even in the art forms invented in our century. Last year's big films — a disaster movie and an epic cartoon — could easily have been conceived (if not executed) in Hollywood's earliest years. Television is still obsessed with game-show, cop-drama and soap-opera formats concocted in the Fifties. As for pop music, experts tell us every week that it is "eating itself" — raiding its back-catalogue with rapacious haste. Little wonder, then, that youngsters are attracted to a medium with no burden of historical "baggage" — the computer.

Of course it is more difficult to evaluate the worth of a new medium, to distinguish gimmicks from the truly imaginative. Many will side with John Updike, who sourly *observed that modern man is* "conditioned to accept newness, whatever it costs". But the mark of civilised individuals is surely that they quickly reject novelty if it has no integrity of content or purpose.

That is as true today as it was for the Victorians, who also struggled to measure integrity in a fast-changing world. Back in 1869 Matthew Arnold declared that the chief task of culture was to "begat a dissatisfaction" with "the common tide of man's thoughts in a wealthy and industrial community", and to "save the future from being vulgarised, even if it cannot save the present". Notions of "vulgarity" have doubtless changed a bit since 1869. Even so, that's not a bad thought to carry into a new year, or a brave new technological world.

The voices Stalin couldn't gag

UNSUNG HEROES: In the last of our series, **Benedict Nightingale** salutes the courageous dissident playwrights of the Soviet Union

If you wish to feel serious rage on the theatre's behalf, may I suggest the following exercise? Read Isaac Babel's *Marya*, Nikolai Erdman's *Suicide* and Yevgheny Shvarts's *Dragon*. Then ponder the proceedings of the first Soviet Writers' Conference in 1934. Then take an incredulous look at Nikolai Pogodin's *Aristocrats*, which was swiftly proclaimed the dramatic "classic" the other plays never had a chance of becoming. Thanks to the oppression of the worst, the fate of the best was to be unsung, cast out, even murdered.

For a few years after the Bolshevik coup the Russian theatre led the world in energy and innovation. Handsome subsidies combined with relative permissiveness to give the ageing Stanislavsky, the younger Meyerhold and other producers the opportunity to stage dramatists as diverse as Gorky and Mayakovsky, author of that fierce satire on greed and corruption in the Soviet state, *The Bedbug*.

> 'By 1934 Stalin's mighty rump had crushed theatre'

But in the later 1920s the apparatchiks were already pow*erful enough* to get Bulgakov's *White Guard* withdrawn, for the crime of protraying the class enemy as less than villainous, and his *Flight* banned. And by 1934 Stalin's mighty rump had descended on the theatre, crushing all originality, all creativity.

That was when Uncle Joe's crony, Andrei Zhdanov, approvingly quoted his master's dictum that writers were "engineers of human souls", explaining that "socialist realism" must replace "bourgeois mysticism, superstition and pornography" and suggesting that the new heroes should be "men and women collective farmers, engineers and members of the Young Communist League". It was also the year when Pogodin decided to treat a tricky subject: the building of the White Sea Canal by the inmates of what was, as it happens, one of Stalin's most notorious labour camps.

Never can there have been a more ideologically correct play than *Aristocrats*. Thanks to an abundance of food and recreation and the sensitivity of a commandant who combines the qualities of Scoutmaster, therapist and playgroup leader, hard cases confess their sins and become wild enthusiasts for progress, rushing off to dig their canal like kids building sandcastles.

Even supposed incorrigables end up weeping with manly gratitude and tossing the principal Chekist in a blanket, while he dispenses useful morals: "The forces that have drawn these people into socialist work are operating with unheard-of daring, with true Bolshevik austerity, and on the broad scale Comrade Stalin has taught us."

In the real world, a rather truer Bolshevik austerity was already claiming its victims. Mayakovsky had shot himself, Gorky was soon to die in suspicious circumstances, Erdman to be exiled, Bulgakov forced to take a menial job, Shvarts to camouflage his views in fairy-stories, Meyerhold and Babel to be tortured and killed. Others embraced what Babel wittily called "the genre of silence". The loss is incalculable in both the literal and the cliché sense. It is as if James I had taken as strongly against the theatre as against tobacco and smothered Jacobean tragedy in its cradle.

But there are three playwrights who in my view deserve especially to be mourned: three whose dramatic bequests, sadly few though they are, should be remembered and revived far more often than is now the case.

What naive madness impelled Stanislavsky to ask Stalin to override his State Censorship Committee's ban on Erdman's *Suicide*? Given its subversive tenor, it is hardly surprising that the dictator wrote back agreeing with those who found the play "empty and even harmful".

Its anti-hero, driven to the brink of self-slaughter by the unemployment and beset by malcontents chivvying him to kill himself as a public protest against their own disappointments, doesn't just phone the Kremlin to tell "him in charge" he hates Marx. He ends up begging the powers-that-be "in the name of millions the freedom to whisper, just whisper that life is hard".

Back in 1979 an RSC production of the play showed it to be quirky, energetic and funny enough to justify Gorky's claim that Erdman was "our new Gogol", but in Russia it was as if it had never existed. The new Gogol disappeared into "a poky little hole of a room with a bunk and a tiny table" in the provinces and never wrote for the theatre again. Yet at least he survived into the 1970s, unlike the even more brilliantly gifted Babel, who was summarily executed in 1940 after being arrested on charges of spying that 15 years later the Soviet authorities themselves admitted to have been trumped up.

To understand Babel the lively, impractical, generous man, read Antonina Pirozhkova's *At His Side*, which is his widow's account of his last years and the decade she spent trying to discover whether he was alive or dead. And to gauge the quality of the talent that was wasted, sample his plays *Sundown* and *Marya*. Both teem with offbeat observation, but the latter is indisputably a masterpiece, in which black-marketeers, prostitutes, drunken army officers and bewildered representatives of old and new orders giddily wander the chaotic Petrograd of 1920. You won't be surprised to learn that the piece was banned while it was in rehearsal in 1935.

Shvarts was luckier. At least nobody stopped him writing his children's stories; at least he died a natural death in 1958. But his wonderfully inventive "children's plays for adults", *The Naked King*, *The Shadow* and *The Dragon*, were all taken off as soon as they were staged in (respectively) 1935, 1940 and 1944. They were well enough coded for the apparatchiks to believe that the despotic regimes they described were to be found in Nazi Germany or the West. Yet there must have been something about the opportunists and terrified toadies littering Shvarts's plots that made the censors wary.

They were right. To enter the sinister, paranoid world of *The Shadow* — the king's ministers find it safest to converse in stuttering half-sentences while pretending to play chess in the open air — is to experience the danger and unpredictability of Stalinism.

And *The Dragon*, in which Lancelot comes to rid a town of the reptilian tyrant, is even more suggestive. The citizens love their master as much as he despises them. As the monster says: "Cut a man's body in half and he'll peg out. But break his spirit and he'll eat out of your hand. In my town you'll find spirits without arms or legs, spirits in chains, threadbare spirits, dead spirits. I know because I've crippled them."

Even today *The Dragon* remains a touchy play in Russia. You can see why. It shows the awful success of Stalin's human engineering. It shows a slavishness, a craving for a Strong Man, so ingrained that ordinary political surgery cannot remove it. No wonder Shvarts died, as Erdman and Babel died, one of the unsung heroes of the century.

DONALD COOPER



Final gesture of despair: Roger Rees plays the central role in the Royal Shakespeare Company's 1980 production of Nikolai Erdman's play *The Suicide*

I flee through flaws, in the flu

CHILDREN'S THEATRE

Being busier than our counterparts in any country I know, British theatre critics are apt to confuse the fictions flowing through their heads and start reviewing their dreams. But never was that more likely for me than this week, when flu struck.

Did I really see dozens of little spiders fall from the ceiling above me with squeaks of "We like you"? Yes, I did, when I caught *Charlotte's Web* at the Polka. Was I asleep when I was surrounded by kids repetitively screeching "We're not scared" in a Lilliputian version of a Nuremberg rally? No, that happened at the Unicorn Theatre's **Hansel and Gretel** at the Arts. Did I actually eat mince pies with Her Majesty on a sunbaked lawn at Balmoral? Sadly, that was the dream.

Mark you, Stuart Paterson's version of Grimm felt far more dreamlike than that. Actually, it resembled the sort of feverish nightmare celebrated in a famous song in *Iolanthe*. So much did he elaborate the simple if evocative tale of Hansel and Gretel; their wicked stepmother, their cowardly father, the witch and her oven that I would not have been shocked if W.S. Gilbert's ravenous horde of friends and relations had come pouring aboard at Sloane Square or South Kensington stations.

As it was, the lost children encountered the members of a small circus in the forest. And these supposedly friendly people led Hansel and Gretel to the wicked witch's cottage. Why? After all, they do not perform interesting tricks or do anything funny. The answer is that the youngest of them have done a deal with Faith Tingle's pouting, lisping and thoroughly satisfactory hag to replace the circus strongman, who is their father and her prisoner, with more appetising flesh.

But that is not the evening's only gratuitous complication. The King of the Fairies is also obsessively pacing the forest in search of his son, who released the witch from her prison when she cried in agony to him and has in turn been incarcerated by her. The show's inadvertent moral is: don't be nice to strangers who seem kind or appear to be in trouble.

A more advertent theme is the search for the father, who emerges from his three incarnations here as a well-meaning but helpless figure, much victimised by nasty women in black.

But does this clarify or obfuscate a good Grimm tale? Perhaps because they were clearer-minded than me, the children in the audience seemed happy; but I found the piece almost as cluttered as the set, which inexplicably consists of piles of books, and even more so than the face of Andrew McDonald's Fairy King, which is so festooned with blackening leaves that it looks as if he has developed Dutch Elm Disease.

Joseph Robinette version of E.B. White's **Charlotte's Web** makes a much more lucid, accessible evening. Nor can you accuse a play about a piglet saved from the knackers by a wily spider of lacking imagination. It is, I suppose, a bit cute, although Neil Smye's pink, porcine Wilbur is perky enough for that not to matter. It is also a mite didactic, although not in the way one would expect nowadays, since White takes a true carnivore's relish in confronting *the tots with the reality of a* food-chain that extends to Olivia Carruthers's mild Charlotte: "I eat flies. I drink their blood. It's the way I'm made."

Overall, a tribute to pigs and arachnids that should appeal to people too.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Youth comes to the rescue

RECITAL

Sorrel Quartet
Wigmore Hall

Although illness forced a complete change in the Wigmore Hall's penultimate concert of 1998, nobody in the audience can have felt let down by the replacement: stepping in for the Brindisi Quartet, the Sorrel Quartet gave a performance to sweep away old year gloom.

Counted among this country's finest young ensembles, the Sorrels — Gina McCormack, Catherine Yates, Vicci Wardman and Helen Thather — are no strangers to the Wigmore Hall, but the opportunity to hear them in masterpieces of the repertory by Haydn, Shostakovich and Dvorák was very welcome.

Their bright tone showed itself right from the buoyant opening of Haydn's Quartet in G major, Op 33 No 5, played with soaring freedom and high spirits. So did the sonorous warmth that distinguishes most of their performances: all the detail Haydn packed into the first movement sounded very alive, and if intonation was sometimes less than perfect, that seemed a small price to pay for an interpretation that revelled in the work's surprising twists and turns. This was an account that revealed the Baroque roots of Haydn's Classicism, as well as pointing towards a more assertive Romanticism. The Scherzo was striking for its muscularity.

Dvorák's *American* Quartet is his most popular chamber work, a smallscale equivalent of the *New World* Symphony and about as American: apart from some pentatonic tunes, it owes everything to the composer's homesickness for his native *Bohemia*.

That sense of yearning dominated the Sorrels' performance, from the unfettered beauty of the first movement to the dance rhythms of the finale. These are players who listen and react to one another, and from the moment that Wardman's dusky viola announced the initial theme and passed it over to McCormack's sweet-toned first violin it was clear that this was going to be a real conversation in music. The impassioned outpouring of their slow movement was one of the evening's highlights.

Another was the dying close of Shostakovich's Fourth Quartet, magnificently judged after the edgy desolation of the work's climax. Indeed, this darkly ambiguous piece was a well-chosen foil to the otherwise upbeat programme: written in 1949, a bad year even by *Stalin's standards, it is a score* that not all players get inside as well as these did here.

Their big sound was heard to best effect in the opening, which soared lyrically before delivering its sting. They were no less at home in the fragmented waltz of the Andantino, taking us into a world of shadowy nostalgia.

JOHN ALLISON

■ **POP ALBUMS**
Compilation mania

ARTS

■ **JAZZ ALBUMS**
Chestnut purée

POP ALBUMS: David Sinclair takes a long, cool look at the Greatest Hits compilations of the year

The biggest of the Best of

No bookie's odds are offered on what will be the Christmas No 1 album, and the album chart is generally spared the influx of novelty items that invade the singles chart at this time of year.

But the album world nevertheless has its own seasonal cross to bear, namely the proliferation of Greatest Hits collections. Last year produced a raft of retrospectives by artists as diverse as James, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Mariah Carey, Paul Weller, Julio Iglesias, Culture Club, Duran Duran, the Levellers and Dire Straits. But out at the front of a crowded field were four blockbuster albums, every one of which sold comfortably in excess of the biggest-selling Greatest Hits compilation of 1997 (by Eternal).

GEORGE MICHAEL
Ladies & Gentlemen — The Best of
(Epic 491705; two discs, £17.99)
Released: Nov 9. **Highest chart position:** No 1. **Number of Top 20 hits:** 19. **UK sales to Christmas:** 1,200,000

IN 1997 *The Best Of Wham!* was one of the top-selling compilation albums, but George Michael dwarfed that achievement in 1998 with *Ladies & Gentlemen.* A double-album featuring all his hits as a solo act — with the unexplained exception of *Monkey* — it achieved a stranglehold on the top of the chart throughout the last seven weeks of 1998, repulsing challenges by Robbie Williams, the Corrs and others. More than just a collection of songs, it has become, like Simply Red's *Stars* before it, a 1990s lifestyle accessory.

The album's title and, it sometimes seemed, its entire publicity campaign, was inspired by the singer's brush with a law-enforcement officer in a Californian public lavatory, an encounter which left his stock curiously enhanced everywhere in the world except America. Chewing over the incident with Michael Parkinson, the singer volunteered the thought that: "It's the things that are missing that make you a star, not the things that you have."

What is missing from Michael's music is a sense of spontaneity, particularly on the slow ballads which predominate on Disc One (subtitled *For the Heart*), where his sibilant singing style is manicured to eerie perfection. Disc Two (*For the Feet*) is livelier but, apart from the louche lyrics, *Ladies & Gentlemen* showcases a catalogue of songs which conform to the most conservative of pop traditions, ample confirmation that underneath that peculiar configuration of facial hair, Michael is really an unbuttoned version of Cliff Richard.


PRESS ASSOCIATION
Funny old game, pop: George Michael came out in spectacular fashion, and brought out *Ladies & Gentlemen*, a Best of album that sold shed-loads

PHIL COLLINS
Hits
(Virgin V2870, £14.49)
Released: Oct 5. **Highest chart position:** No 1. **Number of Top 20 hits:** 15. **UK sales to Christmas:** 900,000

REELING from the conspicuously poor sales of his 1996 album, *Dance into the Light,* Phil Collins needed a reliable banker to stabilise a solo career that seemed to have gone seriously off the rails. *Hits* did the trick with room to spare, and whatever you may think of Collins's unpretentious pop fare, this album is an impressive monument to a recorded legacy that has always been more about quality of cut than depth of material.

Perhaps ominously, the only song out of the album's 16 tracks not to reach the Top 20 was *True Colors,* the one new single he released this year. As is often the case with such collections, it looks as if *Hits* may have drawn a bold line underneath Collins's best years.

U2
The Best Of 1980-1990 & B-Sides
(Island 524612; two discs, £17.99)
Released: Nov 2. **Highest chart position:** No 1. **Number of Top 20 hits:** 11. **UK sales to Christmas:** 900,000

HAVING negotiated a deal that Croesus would have envied to allow their record company to release a compilation of their hits, U2 took a typically unusual approach to the project, selecting a ten-year timeframe and effectively issuing two editions of *The Best of 1980-1990.* As well as the basic single-disc version incorporating all the hits from that era, they also released a "limited edition" double-album which included a disc comprised of B-Sides (exactly how "limited" is not specified, but the quantity already in circulation is greater than the 300,000 copies required to qualify for a platinum disc).

Although they were always prone to the odd pompous flourish — Bono's yell at the start of *New Year's Day* is a spectacular toe-curler — this remains an outstanding body of work by any standards. Brimful of beauty, wit and an evangelical passion, songs such as *Pride (in the Name of Love), With or Without You* and *When Love Comes to Town* have passed the test of time with flying colours.

M PEOPLE
The Best Of
(BMG 74321 61387, £14.49)
Released: Nov 2. **Highest chart position:** No 2. **Number of Top 20 hits:** 11. **UK sales to Christmas:** 800,000

THE only act in this select company to have enjoyed success exclusively in the 1990s, M People have harnessed aspirational lyrics to a modern disco beat with consistently enchanting results, cornering a market that used to be the preserve of Level 42. Heather Small's husky voice sounds even more delectable than you remember on a run of gilt-edged hits including *Search for the Hero, Moving on Up* and *One Night in Heaven.*

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

TOP TEN ALBUMS

1	(1)	Ladies & Gentlemen - the Best of	George Michael (Epic)
2	(2)	I've Been Expecting You	Robbie Williams (Chrysalis)
3	(3)	Where We Belong	Boyzone (Polydor)
4	(4)	Talk on Corners	Corrs (Atlantic)
5	(7)	Step One	Steps (Jive)
6	(5)	The Best of	M People (M People)
7	(8)	The Best of 1980-1990	U2 (Island)
8	(10)	B*witched	B*witched (Epic)
9	(12)	Ray of Light	Madonna (Maverick)
10	(9)	One Night Only	Bee Gees (Polydor)

COPYRIGHT CIN ● *Figure in brackets indicates last week's position*

Roasting on an open-minded fire

CYRUS CHESTNUT
Cyrus Chestnut
(Atlantic 7567-83140-2)

BETTY CARTER may have been jazz's most grievous loss of 1998. But her spirit — if this excellent album and an earlier release by another of her former piano players, Stephen Scott, are anything to go by — lives on in the work produced by her former band members.

She demanded not only whip-smart reactions and musical discipline, but also sensitivity and imagination from her sidemen, and all these qualities are apparent on this, Cyrus Chestnut's third album as a leader. His playing has discernible roots in blues, stride and gospel, and he is versatile enough to operate with equal facility in lyrical/hymnic or rollicking mode. But he is a team player, as his easy meshing with contrasting saxophonists Joe Lovano and James Carter proves.

With faultless rhythm-section work from bassist Ron Carter and drummers Billy Higgins and Lewis Nash, and two attractively languorous vocal appearances from Anita Baker, this is an unequivocally enjoyable album.

JAZZ ALBUMS

PAUL ROGERS QUARTET
Time of Brightness
(Rare Music RM027)

THE Paul Rogers Quartet, in addition to its bass-playing leader/composer, comprises saxophonist Paul Dunmall, drummer Tony Levin and pianist Sophia Domancich. The three men are members of the superb improvising quartet, Mujician, and the freer passages in Rogers's impassioned music share much of that band's interactive intensity.

Rogers and Dunmall, however, are also regular partners in a duo playing folk music, and the themes sparking off the album's two suites contain enough of that form's bright fluency to provide a balance to the energy of the band's free improvisation. Domancich brings telling dynamic and textural variety to the quartet's music, making the album a serious rival to recent issues from UK sextet Dreamtime and American saxophonist David S. Ware as improvised jazz recording of 1998.

CHRIS PARKER

WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London. Phone venue for ticket availability.

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE: The D'Oyly Carte Company comes to the West End bringing Gilbert and Sullivan's joyful adventures with pirates, policemen and a modern major-general.
Queens (0171-494 5041).

QUATRE MAINS: Astonishing dance for hands created by Andrew Dawson, creator of *Thunderbirds FAB* and Jozef Houben, director for The Right Size.
Lyric Studio, W6 (0181-741 2311).

CHICAGO: Maria Friedman injects new blood into the hit revival of Kander and Ebb's musical about murder and fickle fame.
Adelphi (0171-344 0055).

THE GOLEM: David Burt and Gaye Brown star in Sylvia Freedman and Cathy Shostak's uplifting new musical about the man-made monster who runs amok.
New End, NW3 (0171-794 0022).

JESUS MY BOY: Tom Conti in John Dowie's fitfully amusing comedy giving Joseph's side of the story.
Apollo, W1 (0171-494 5070).

PETER PAN: Justin Salinger in the title role, with David Troughton as Captain Hook, in the return of Fiona Laird's enjoyable production.
Olivier, SE1 (0171-452 3000).

THE SNOWMAN: The much-loved Raymond Briggs characters soar over the audience in Bill Alexander's joyful production.
Peacock, WC2 (0171-863 8222).

THE KING AND I. Whistle a happy tune with Phil Willmott's Steam Factory production of the feelgood Rodgers and Hammerstein musical.
BAC (0171-223 2223).

LATE NITE CATECHISM: Maripat Donovan plays the unnerving Sister in her American comedy hit, co-written with Vicki Quade, cowing the audience with old-time Catholicism.
Jermyn Street (0171-287 2875)

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA: Tom Goodman-Hill and Dominic Rowan play the estranged friends in Edward Hall's pleasing RSC production first seen at Stratford
Pit (0171-638 8891)

ARABIAN NIGHTS: Ali Baba, Sinbad and lesser-known tales adapted and directed by Dominic Cooke for the Christmas show.
Young Vic (0171-928 6363).

CINDERELLA: Neil Bartlett and the Shockheaded Peter team stage a seriously wonderful version of Angela Carter's panto. Magic provided by Paul Kieve.
Lyric (0181-741 8701/2311).

THE BEST OF TIMES: The Bridewell Theatre's programme of Jerry Herman songs from La Cage aux Folles, Mame, Mack & Mabel and Hello, Dolly! transfers to the West End. Cast includes Kathryn Evans.
Vaudeville (0171-836 9987).

LITTLE MALCOLM AND HIS STRUGGLE AGAINST THE EUNUCHS: Denis Lawson directs Ewan McGregor in David Halliwell's celebrated student fascist play.
Hampstead (0171-722 9301).

INTO THE WOODS: Sondheim's nightmarish take on favourite fairytales. John Crowley directs the winter musical.
Donmar (0171-369 1732).

THE INVENTION OF LOVE: John Wood plays the aged A.E. Housman twitting his early self in Tom Stoppard's glittering play. West End transfer for Richard Eyre's production.
Theatre Royal, Haymarket (0171-930 8800)

AMADEUS: David Suchet plays Salieri with Michael Sheen as Mozart in Peter Hall's strongly cast production of the Shaffer play.
Old Vic (0171-928 7616).

WEST SIDE STORY: Alan Johnson's stylish revival of Leonard Bernstein's classic is a triumph of clatter and testosterone over the timeless Manhattan barney between the Jets and the Sharks.
Prince Edward (0171-447 5400).

ANNIE: A musical by Strouse/Charnin to tug at your heartstrings while playing loonie tunes on them. Lily Savage is the dastardly orphanage wardress. With Kevin Colson and Charlene Barton as saviour and orphan
Victoria Palace (0171-834 1317)

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

Geoff Brown's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

THE ACID HOUSE (18): Three darkly comic tales of drugs, drink and hallucination by Irvine Welsh. An indigestible onslaught. With Stephen McCole, Ewen Bremner, and Kevin McKidd. Director, Paul McGuigan

SITCOM (18): A French bourgeois family unbuttons itself. Mildly diverting lampoon, excellently acted ensemble cast. Director, Francois Ozon

STAR TREK: INSURRECTION (PG): Patrick Stewart's Enterprise crew come to the rescue of a peaceable race who have found the elixir of youth. Lightly likeable. With Donna Murphy, F. Murray Abraham. Director, Jonathan Frakes

DANCING AT LUGHNASA (PG): Compressed and perfunctory version of Brian Friel's play about five spinster sisters in 1930s Donegal. With Meryl Streep, Catherine McCormack and Kathy Burke; director, Pat O'Connor.

RUSH HOUR (15): LA and Hong Kong cops join forces on a kidnap case. Routine fare, enlivened by Asian legend Jackie Chan and motormouth comic Chris Tucker. Director, Brett Ratner.

TWILIGHT (15): Down-at-heel private eye (Paul Newman) is lured into a murder mystery. Inconsequential plot, but a wonderful cast. With Gene Hackman, Susan Sarandon, James Garner. Director, Robert Benton.

CURRENT

ENEMY OF THE STATE (15): Will Smith's lawyer tumbles unwittingly upon a political conspiracy. Exciting and fast-paced thriller, with Gene Hackman and Jon Voight. Director, Tony Scott

THE MIGHTY (PG): Endearing tale of two outcast children, one hulking, the other crippled, who pool their resources. Peter Chelsom directs Sharon Stone, Kieran Culkin and Elden Henson

WHAT DREAMS MAY COME (15): Robin Williams wades through the afterlife trying to find his loved ones. Technically dazzling, but sabotaged by a woolly script. With Annabella Sciorra, Cuba Gooding Jr and Max Von Sydow. Director, Vincent Ward.

THE PRINCE OF EGYPT (U): Splendid animation, but there's not much for kiddies in the biblical story of Moses leading the Israelites to the promised land. Voice talents include Val Kilmer and Ralph Fiennes. The directors are Brenda Chapman, Steve Hickner and Simon Wells

BABE: PIG IN THE CITY (U): Everyone's favourite talking pig faces the torments of the hostile city. Grotesque, misguided sequel to the hit film. With Magda Szubanski. Director, George Miller

THE NEGOTIATOR (15): Police hostage negotiator takes hostages himself to prove his innocence. Overblown suspense thriller, with Samuel L. Jackson and Kevin Spacey. Director, F. Gary Gray.

OUT OF SIGHT (15): Escaped convict George Clooney finds himself falling for the federal marshal (Jennifer Lopez) on his tail. Dazzling, inventive version of Elmore Leonard's novel. Director, Steven Soderbergh.

BLADE (18): Extravagant, jumbled horror fantasy, fun for a time, with Wesley Snipes as the vampire-hunting action hero from the pages of Marvel Comics. With Stephen Dorff. Director, Stephen Norrington.

MY NAME IS JOE (15): Reformed Glasgow alcoholic begins an awkward romance with a healthcare worker. Impassioned marvel from director Ken Loach. With Peter Mullan and Louise Goodall.

THE TRUMAN SHOW (PG): Jim Carrey discovers that his whole life has been caught on camera for TV. Meticulous and intelligent satire, directed by Peter Weir. With Laura Linney and Noah Emmerich.

ELIZABETH (15): Cate Blanchett is magnificent as the young Queen in this lively costume drama. With Geoffrey Rush, Joseph Fiennes and Christopher Eccleston. Director, Shekhar Kapur.

OPERA & BALLET

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THEATRES

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هكذا من الأصل

■ POP PREDICTIONS
Like heroes of 1999

How was '99 for you?

The pop artists of the year are already working on the albums that will make our lives that bit better

CAITLIN MORAN

What does 1999 look like? It looks like this: a depressed woman who resembles Pippi Longstocking! A man who's locked himself in the vaults of an old bank and is trying to scare us to death! A band that refuses to do interviews and will only be photographed wearing masks and crowns! And Oasis! Yes, Oasis!

Nearly of the Britpop behemoths have albums out this year: Blur's sixth album is being preceded by the eight-minute long *Tender*, which already sounds like a Single of the Year. Supergrass are releasing what will probably be their last album, as they now appear to hate each others' guts. And Oasis are back in the ring — and given that Noel Gallagher has recently admitted that *Be Here Now* was "crap", maybe the new album won't be. But then, as Noel has apparently allowed Liam to write a couple of the tracks, maybe the world isn't quite ready for *Life is Like a Fried Egg Sandwich* and *Eh?*

There are several other contenders — aside from *Liam, You've Been My Band*, or whatever he calls it — for potential albums of 1999. Pippi Longstocking-alike Beth Orton is a bit a rogue entry. Although her scruffily acoustic debut, *Trailer Park*, picked up a 1997 Mercury Music Prize nomination and earned her the sobriquet Queen of the Comedown, one wouldn't automatically have her down as the next zillion billion seller.

But Orton has spent her two-year sabbatical wisely: she's had her heart smashed into brittle rubble and the result, on the forthcoming *Central Reservation*, is an album of black coffee and pre-dawn helplessness that should replace Portishead's *Portishead* at the top of the Everybody Loves This Album list.

This year also sees the release of The Beta Band's first proper album. These are the guys who refuse to do interviews and wear paper masks and crowns in their photoshoots. Even though I work with words and everything, it's quite hard to describe exactly what it is they do — one gets the idea that they are all into wildly obscure prog-funk vinyl and gain some kind of nourishment from the sound of foaming bongos. But they have just got It, the It which has your spine wrapping itself around your skull like a roller-blind and makes the very tips of your fingers feel numb.

The Aphex Twin bought a bank last year. It's in the City of London, and the walls of the vaults are so thick he can blow the cones on his speakers while, above him, the City dwindles and roars through each day.

The Aphex Twin — or Richard James, as the estate agent would no doubt have addressed him, because it's his real name — is a law unto himself. If we imagine the music industry as the United Kingdom, then the Aphex Twin is the Isle of Man: they do things differently there. He grows a small ginger beard, yet he is a genius. He releases albums as and when he pleases, yet they are not self-indulgent whalemeat. He's been described as the Techno Mozart, but he's really the Nineties Kraftwerk, crafting elegant, spacious songs with symphonic beats. More importantly than that, however, he's the only currently operating artist who's trying to scare his fans to death.

The video for *Come to Daddy*, which depicted a world of feral children, all with James's face, was a storming effort; but it's the current Aphex Twin calendar that will see off anyone with cardiac arrhythmia and/or psychiatric problems. The entry for June is so disturbingly evil — it's James with 36C breasts, in a white bikini, with a bloodied crotch and the face of a goblin — that half his fanbase will be on medication before the year's out. Happily, he has an album out in the summer.

Although in some ways dissimilar from the Aphex Twin — he doesn't look as if he lives inside hedges and will grab you with his gnarled feet and drag you down into Hell — Stephen Duffy also eschews the sterile environment of the studio for something a bit more vibey. He re-formed his old band, the Lilac Time, blew his recording advance on mending the roof of his brother's barn, and then recorded a forthcoming, still-untitled album of blissy dusk-pop in it.

It's worth noting that while Nick Drake has recently become the hippest name to drop, Stephen Duffy named his band after a Nick Drake lyric in 1987, when everyone was into Glen Medeiros and stone-washed jeans, and has been continuing Drake's legacy of stoned autumnal reverie ever since.

And of course, after a five-year wait, both Elastica and Stereo MC's are supposed to be releasing their eagerly awaited albums this year. However, as they've both been put back more times than the completion date of the Jubilee Line extension and are starting to be classed in encyclopaedias along with unicorns, gryphons and the citizens of Atlantis, don't start queueing at HMV just yet.



Will the tallest woman in pop soon become the biggest? This could be the year Beth Orton is handed the palm

■ POP GIG
Deadpan joy of New Order

Ragged royalty

MOST pundits believed that New Order had disappeared for good after dissolving acrimoniously in the wake of their 1993 album, *Republic*. But having reconvened with great success at this summer's Reading Festival, the deadpan quartet headlined two giant festive shows. The first took place at Manchester's Evening News Arena on Tuesday, the second last night at London's Alexandra Palace.

In Manchester, with typically perverse logic, New Order delivered a set which owed far more to their doomy post-punk roots than their more recently acknowledged status as

LIVE GIG

the godfathers of British techno. As at Reading, they dusted down several stark classics from their previous incarnation as Joy Division, notably the spectral rumble of *Atmosphere* and a somewhat ragged renditon of *Love Will Tear Us Apart*.

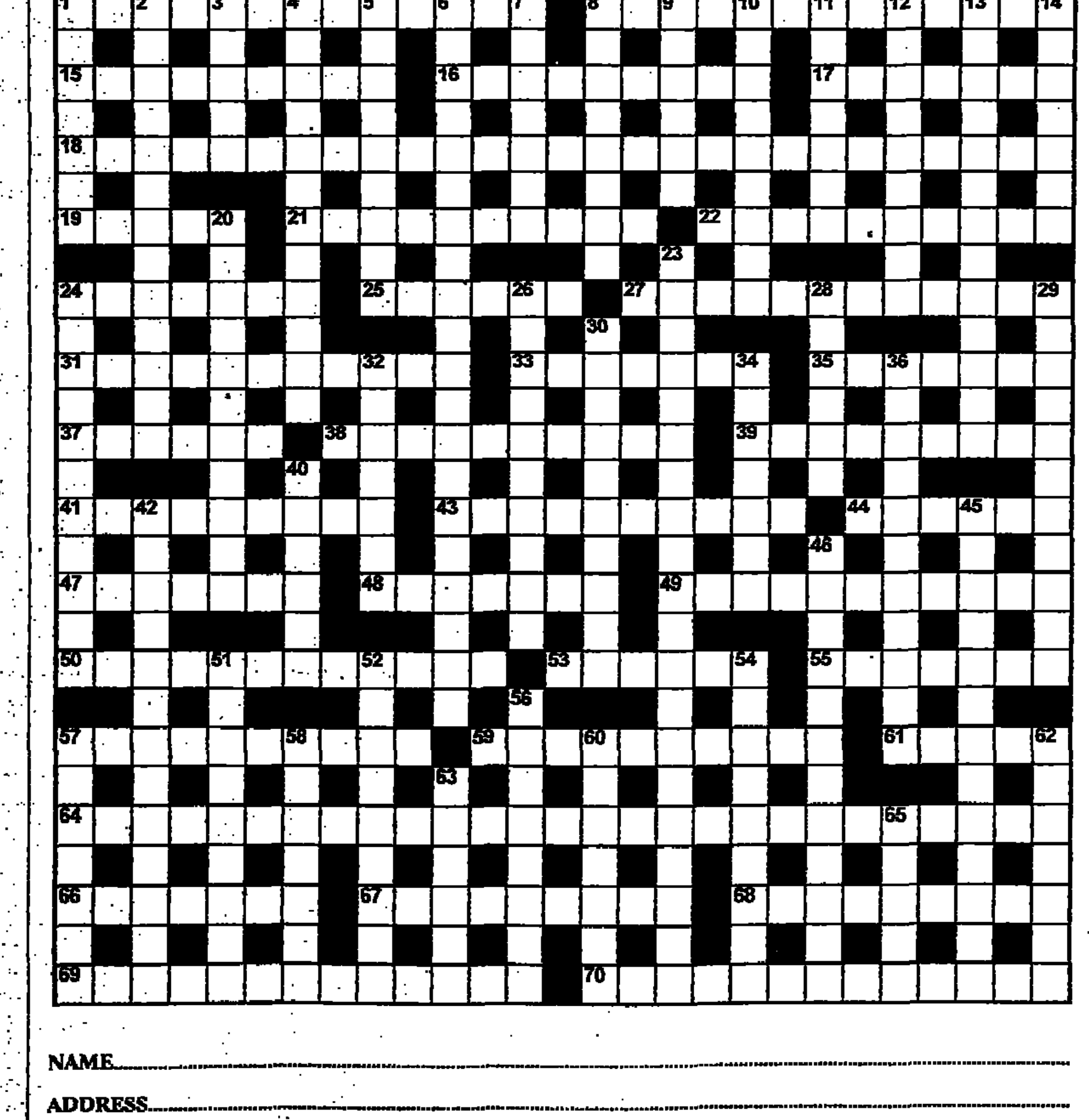
Even more polished tunes whose studio blueprints are sleek disco projectiles, such as *Touched by the Hand of God* and *Bizarre Love Triangle*, were buried beneath the din of Bernard Sumner's scouring guitar and Peter Hook's truculent bass. Indeed, this was probably their most dissonant and wilfully amateurish show for at least a decade, with Sumner botching lines and missing notes in almost every number.

But there were also moments of sublime pop brilliance. The majestic *Regret* withstood Sumner's careless manhandling with ease, as did an anthemically expanded reworking of *True Faith*. However shambolic their delivery may have been, New Order's tireless energy could not be faulted. And however weary they may be of wheeling out such pop landmarks as *Blue Monday*, they still invested it with passion and grit.

STEPHEN DALTON

ACROSS
1 Some Ps secretly follow ta: I tch (6,7)
8 Traditionally stick to door-door deliveries (7,6)
15 Glory about one's son being taught? (9)
16 Crew given sack, having reversal growth (9)
17 Do people having old stale restored (7)
18 Ash said, it was cruel to coin site herbal drug for penal use (2,5,2,5-3,4,4,2)
19 Cook at home, pet's put out (5)
21 Laid endlessly, getting on pat maybe in folksy gaming (10)
22 Speak about number the French regarded as illiterate (10)
24 Trabroadcast about cotton house (7)
25 Obrianist is hard to create at first (6)
27 The position of the men on the board (12)
31 Oil coked in batter — gin stick about it? (11)
33 With furious with top player about article . . . (7)
35 . . . put out again, concerning disputed point (7)
37 Set an order for port (6)
38 Lelling with celebrity about it, following protest (1
39 Good ingredient for cooking tuna, sole or lobster (9)
41 B harming, making eance (9)
43 Social skill required in merchant shipping? (10)
44 T-flight accommodation? (6
47 C assisting comeback in variety, locally (7)
48 Pring along, getting in the same boat (7)
49 Contrary to expectation, not likely to be discovered? (8-3)
50 Requesting a quote, after individual performances (1
53 American actor and English anor coming round (6)
55 Lg deliveries : striker's intended to miss (7)
57 I make arrangements for letters to be sent to the press (
59 Ad to see my return as a singer? (5,5)
61 Faithless character? Certainly not one to grumble about (
63 So tired quoting Shakespeare — his first example is worth being awarded nothing (2,2,6,6,1,6,4)
66 Heard someone gullible offered help (7)
67 One's very short with elderly relative, strangely remote (9)
68 Father the gist and give a b back (9)
69 Second mischief-maker met appears smug (-9)
70 So some unearthing, given al not at first impartial (3)

DOWN
1 Made comfortable, with first of drugs injected (7)
2 Jenny, maybe, finally ducking out of tryst in the offing? (13)
3 Give one's view of love, and suffer grief (5)
4 Mansion a lord watches being demolished (6,6)
5 Type of butter nanny prefers (5-4)
6 Lack sound reasons, unable to go out on a limb? (3,4,1,3,2,5,2)
7 Nicholas's wife was a star in variety (7)
8 Put off letters — new US writer's coming round (8)
9 Beginning to suffer, going mad with a rash? (6)
10 You've to take into consideration if you've to make this plural (9)
11 Local species may be unsettled, yet cope (7)
12 I'll put up with a great deal over a long period, given a rise (9)
13 Various translations of a work of Ovid? (13)
14 Hang the outlay, hosting American! (7)
20 Experimenting with light dye, I'll try to make improvements (4,3,4)
23 Nurse likely to be censured set ward in uproar — try to exploit that? (4,2,8,6)
24 Inferior, like some 8 across? (6-5)
26 One may start off this month with duty list soldier put up (10)
28 Despot's given truly heartless tirade (6)
29 For soldiers, order current type of coat (7,4)
30 Think carefully, and take up occupation again? (10)
32 Unemotional type neglecting new, pleasant composer (7)
34 Miserable, having benefit completely cut off (7)
36 One has Doric construction — solid (11)
40 Plain case I lost (6)
42 Possibly comparable? It initially looks questionable (13)
45 I extol golfer's versatility — one may relieve tension (13)
46 Personal form of expression that's unheard of (4,8)
51 They offer recipe for success with a course (9)
52 Suspended methods to catch decay left in teeth (9)
54 Has dinner prepared for supreme council (9)
56 Start work again in Police Dept. — that's taken for granted (8)
57 Strong support for parts of an estate (7)
58 Succeed in acquiring property (7)
60 Was deserving of ceremony at sea? (7)
62 Upset one gent I'd fired (7)
63 Lord — a fellow that's first class (6)
65 Change prevalent in India (5)



NEW YEAR JUMBO CROSSWORD 203

In our New Year Jumbo Crossword competition, a prize of £100 will be awarded for the first correct solution opened on Thursday, January 21, 1999. Entries to Bank Holiday Jumbo (203), Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The winner and solution will be published in Weekend on Saturday, January 23

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

POSTCODE ....

Times Two New Year Jumbo

There is no prize for this crossword. The solution will be published on Monday, January 11

ACROSS
1 V Hugo book; a musical (3,10)
8 Study of community relationships (6,7)
15 Queen's N American subjects (9)
16 Returning missile (9)
17 Attack (7)
18 "Poetry —" *(Robert Frost)* (2,4,4,4,2,11)
19 A nocturnal lizard (5)
21 All those who see newspaper (10)
22 Home-made pot, rug, etc (10)
24 Support oneself (on) (7)
25 Thinly scattered (6)
27 The Magi (5,4,3)
31 Impossible to transfer (11)
33 Prayer, its bell (7)
35 Rank; a mil. formation (7)
37 Element 1 (6)
38 Oboe family instrument (3,7)
39 Lay down again (9)
41 Deceiving; lashing (bowsprit) (9)
43 Position where view taken (10)
44 Quirk (6)
47 A green/yellow bunting (7)
48 Girl's name; *her seat (anag.)* (7)
49 Degree of heat (11)
50 Science of disease treatment (12)
53 Scattered about (6)
55 Workers at keyboard (7)
57 Bad-weather-protection entrances (5,5)
59 Students of China (10)
61 Damage; excavated waste (5)
64 To fail to spread risk (2,3,3,4,4,2,3,6)
66 One from Saudi (7)
67 A W Spanish city (9)
68 Circumvention; a keeping away from (9)
69 Piety; scrupulous exactitude (13)
70 In naughty, teasing, fashion (13)

DOWN
1 Missing; unavailable (7)
2 Portable advertising site (8,5)
3 Mountbatten its last Viceroy (5)
4 Using hyperbole (12)
5 German shepherds (9)
6 *Palely loitering Knight* poem *(Keats)* (2,5,4,4,5)
7 Marriage partners (7)
8 Precise, particular (8)
9 Full of guile (6)
10 Make worse (9)
11 Bubble of froth (7)
12 Examples, occurrences (9)
13 Units of distance at sea (8,5)
14 (Species) no longer around (7)
20 Test of views (7,4)
23 Cooper *Hawkeye* novel (3,4,2,3,8)
24 Unpowered vessel (7,4)
26 Tricked, forced, into joining (ship once) (10)
28 Holds and uses (6)
29 Notwithstanding (11)
30 Ornamental moulding; *get Grandad (anag.)* (3-3-4)
32 Fetched (7)
34 Country to E of Guyana (7)
36 Sea-horse genus; area of brain (11)
40 Her future husband (6)
42 Nacre (6-2-5)
45 Women intellectuals *(hist.)* (13)
46 Male hormone (12)
51 Letting in (9)
52 Proverbially slow movers (9)
54 One with nervous disorder (9)
56 Quandaries (8)
57 (Weather) staying good (3,4)
58 Florida city; AYLI character (7)
60 Medieval polyphony (7)
62 Random draw (7)
63 Wooden wheel rim (6)
65 Of sound, its recording (5)

Times Two Crossword, page 40

media times

The seeds of self-destruction

Peter Mandelson's early combative press handling became, sadly, habit-forming, says **Christine Buckley**

When Stephen Byers, the new Trade and Industry Secretary, walks through the ever-revolving door at the DTI next week his first aim must be to last longer than the 150 days of his predecessor.

He will have no shortage of advice about the best way forward. But he could do worse than start with his own public and press relations — a role which, bizarrely, Peter Mandelson never got to grips with in his time in government.

Robert Harris, the author, described the press coverage of his friend's loan scandal as the worst since Hitler. He was exaggerating, but he had a point. Some of Mandelson's special treatment was secured by sheer irony — that Labour's king of spin was tarnished by the same sleaze that he so effectively campaigned against. But there was a second irony — that the great communicator had a fundamental inability to communicate on his own behalf. In as much as the screaming headlines before Christmas helped to shape Mandelson's decision that he should resign, he was hoist by his own petard.

> He just couldn't resist wielding the truncheon

Mandelson's relations with the media were forged when he had a fight on his hands. As director of communications for Labour during the Kinnock years he had to attempt to present a unified front when the party was losing its direction and the press was hostile.

Part of his approach was to bully lobby correspondents, picking off individuals at press conferences and favouring less questioning reporters. There is scarcely a political reporter from the time that does not have a Mandelson shouting-match story. From then on he broadened his attacks across national press correspondents until he became a master of news manipulation through Labour's rebuttal unit which, arguably, shaped much of the political news agenda in the run-up to the last general election. Increasingly, he became more of a hate figure. But, by the last election, he should have known better and should have ensured that others fired the public relations bullets.

By then he was an MP for five years and, more importantly, Tony Blair's most trusted and valuable political ally. Two years ago Mandelson was the man most likely to achieve the heights of government. He would have been advised to have put a distance between himself and spin-doctoring, concerning himself more publicly with policy-shaping.

But he couldn't resist being seen to wield the truncheon. While publicly bemoaning his own lack of good PR, many think he savoured his unpopularity because it could be interpreted as fear, therefore enhancing his power. It was a silly and elemental mistake. But Mandelson seems to have benefited from little, if any, sensible advice.

So his hubris continued into Government when, as Minister without Portfolio, he became the Government's key spin-doctor. Then came Mandelson's promotion to the Cabinet as Trade and Industry Secretary. Here was a proper job which he could embrace with vigour and with which he could raise the profile of the DTI to heights not seen since the Heseltine reign. And he did. Mandelson's short tenure was a rare blast of energy and enthusiasm through a department that had become both a backwater and a political graveyard.



Home truth: while publicly bemoaning his own lack of good PR, many believe that Peter Mandelson savoured his fearsome reputation

Yet his penchant for projecting a poor image rolled on despite pledging to the TUC in his first major speech "no more spin, honest". Mandelson had a particular unease at the DTI — industrial journalists. His dislike of them, part of whose role is to cover trade unions, was well and previously documented. He thought that they were too ready to put over the unions' case and uncontrollable in that they do not necessarily need to be friendly to politicians to get stories.

It had been hoped that Mandelson would adopt a more mature attitude in Government. He didn't. For the recent Competitiveness White Paper, he excluded me from a briefing and told the BBC that he didn't want Steve Evans, its industry correspondent, to cover the story. Both Evans and I covered the publication of the White Paper, which, ironically, was largely well-received and favourably reported.

The BBC told Mandelson that Evans would do all radio coverage as well as television, thus freezing out the Secretary of State from half the airwaves if he did not co-operate. He did, but went on to tell other journalists he wanted his ministerial actions covered by business journalists and that industrial correspondents were "far too redolent of trade unions and old Labour". Mandelson turned down requests for interviews, did not take questions at the Confederation of British Industry conference and excluded many reporters who covered his areas of responsibility. Representatives of Vogue had more success in getting access when they featured his now famous home.

He was silly on two counts. Industrial correspondents report on many business-related issues, not just labour relations. They cover almost the entire brief of the DTI, in fact. Secondly, to dismiss out of hand correspondents who talk to trade unions, who represent the interests of seven million people, and whose activities come under the DTI's auspices was — for an Industry Secretary — ludicrous.

It is likely that nothing could have saved Mandelson from an untimely exit from Government once news leaked of Geoffrey Robinson's loan. But the man without whom new Labour would not have been elected may have secured a more dignified departure if he had been more aware of his public image and a little less ready to rely on bullying as a communications tool.

● *The author is industrial correspondent of* The Times

CableTV packages may face scrutiny

THE Independent Television Commission is pushing ahead with an investigation into whether it is fair for cable companies to "bun" together a package including a telephone line and TV channels, *writes Ray Snoddy*

The package, offered to subscribers for the cost of renting a phone line, has been successful in driving up the number of cable subscribers.

Last year the ITC changed the nature of how multi-channel TV is sold in the UK when it dismantled the existing system of charging for large packages of basic TV channels before viewers could get access to premium channels.

As a result, cable subscribers have typically been offered the low-price initial package, including a telephone line, but were then can choose from a variety of smaller premium packages.

Now the ITC is likely to produce a consultative document which will seek to create a more level playing field for competitors in the market.

Unlike cable companies, neither satellite nor digital terrestrial TV operators have the capability of offering a telephone service that competes with BT. One option for the ITC would be to insist that consumers should not have to take the telephone and TV package. It could insist that the option of buying either part of the package at a fair price should be available.

At last year's European Cable Convention in London Elisabeth Murdoch, managing director of Sky Networks, gave warning that as cable companies became more successful they would attract regulation. News International, owner of *The Times*, has a 40 per cent stake in BSB.



From eloquent forays into the mind of John Lennon to hammy rodents, noodle fights and cringe-inducing stereotypes of Euro-glamour, the television advertisements of 1998 produced a potpourri of style, humour and pure farce

Commercial breaks: winners and losers



IN THE year that Allan Leighton, the chief executive of Asda, committed advertising heresy by declaring "I am a fan of wallpaper advertising", the issue of advertising effectiveness — and how to prove it — hung heavy over the industry.

Wallpaper advertising is creative work that is so bland and inoffensive as to be able to pass unnoticed night after night on your television set, or not interrupt you as you turn the pages of your favourite publication.

It can still work, through the drip-drip repetition of a huge advertising spend forcing its way into the consumer's subconscious. Historically, the leading exponent of this technique is Procter & Gamble, with its ad campaigns for the likes of Ariel, Daz, Bold and Fairy.

Other exponents include big retailers such as Asda and MFI, and the Dixons/Currys group. It is the type of advertising that never wins awards, and which no one can remember even if pushed, but — to the horror of the luvvier elements in the industry — it appears to shift product. The argument about what is and what is not effective advertising has never raged more fiercely because clients are no longer prepared to accept Lord Leverhulme's adage that half their advertising budget will be wasted, but nobody knows which half.

The Institute of Practitioners in Advertising's Effectiveness Awards exist to carry the ad industry's message to the client community, but its last two grand prix winners have proved controversial: BT, because critics suggested its success was down to its vast budget; and, this year, the Health Education Authority's anti-drugs advertising, because many thought the proof offered was questionable.

But behind this quest for effectiveness is the issue of trust. Or the lack of it. Rightly or wrongly, the advertising industry has not regained the trust of much of the marketing community lost during the last recession.

Too many clients believed that too many agencies were making too much money out of them, without being able to prove whether the money was well spent.

In a gloomier 1999, harassed marketing directors, with finance directors breathing down their necks, will be seeking supporting proof as never before. It's one reason that an over-reliance on pre-air consumer research has led to more and more campaigns that are safe but uninspiring.

As a result, the biggest challenge for the UK ad industry in 1999 is to convince its clients to value its strategic and creative intuition, the very skills for which ad agencies are hired in the first place. It will be able to do so only if it can restore lost trust. Taking the need to demonstrate effectiveness more seriously would be a start.

BEST OF 1998

1. VW POLO: SELF-DEFENCE
The best of the brilliant VW advertising is set in a tai-chi class, where it slowly becomes apparent that the participants are miming the actions of getting into a car, right down to adjusting the rear-view mirror. My favourite.

2. NIKE: AIRPORT
This is the best of the World Cup advertising by a long mile. The Brazilian team going through its paces in front of a captivated airport terminal audience and a mildly impressed Eric Cantona was so entrancing that it allowed us to forget about the commercialisation of football before the World Cup.

3. VW PASSAT: RULER
"Is that a ruler in your pocket or are you just pleased to see me?" The inevitable punchline in the latest of the "obsession" series for the Passat is that the VW engineer produces a ruler, much to Fraulein Barfly's disappointment.

4. AUDI A8: GOLF CLUB
The ad that finally exposed the petty world of golf clubs and the sad people who frequent them. Clubs are apparently banning Audis from their car parks in return. Nothing's ever made me want to buy an Audi more.

5. IKEA: DOWNSIZING
The ad that highlighted just how cheap it was to kit out your entire office at Ikea for the price of one junior. It was withdrawn after complaints. What happened to our renowned sense of humour?

6. ONE2ONE: CHRIS 2 JOHN
The best in this excellent series since Ian Wright and Martin Luther King. You really do believe that Evans would inundate Lennon with questions, but would he answer back? One2One has passed into the language with great style.

7. BATCHELOR'S SUPERNOODLES: LADS
Advertising for the *Men Behaving Badly* generation. The mates larking about in the kitchen, throwing noodles at each other in martial-arts-movie style commits advertising heresy through its lack of respect for the product — and it's so much the better for it.

8. SCALEXTRIC: BOYS
Along with Ikea, the most politically incorrect advertising in years. I love the one where the new father cradles someone else's baby because it's a boy.

9. SONY STAMINA: CRASH
A woman leaves her man outside a classic desert diner. As he struggles to get his camcorder to work, a car roars up, suddenly flips over and crashes into the roof of the diner amid a huge explosion. She returns from the washroom, perplexed. He looks sheepish. It is one of the best-directed spots of the year.

10. McDONALD'S: EUROSTAR SPOOF
Alan Shearer sits on the train taking the mickey out of Eric Cantona's performance in an earlier Eurostar ad. Shearer philosophises about gibberish, and wonders about the McDonald's of the Scottish fan sitting behind him. The best of some excellent McDonald's World Cup promotions.

WORST OF 1998

1. LEVI'S: KEVIN THE HAMSTER
The great "boy meets girl" campaign came to an end last year, only to be replaced with an appalling set of commercials that ruined years of good work building the brand. Forget whether Kevin really died or not, it might have been an interesting ad — for Diesel!

2. FORD KA: FOOTBALL BOOTS
The shape and design of the funky Ford Ka were compared to a pair of football boots (well, it was pre-World Cup) by a bestubbled hunk grinning insanely. Everything about it was misguided, from the terrible casting to the pretentious directing.

3. KERRYGOLD: JACK CHARLTON
To be precise, this was advertising Kerrygold's Dubliner Irish Cheese, so who better to endorse it than that celebrated honorary Irishman, Jack Charlton? Cue every soft-focus Irish cliché in the book.

4. CITROËN XSARA: CLAUDIA SCHIFFER
What do you do if you have Claudia Schiffer under contract to advertise your unremarkable car with its unpronounceable name? Ask her to walk down a sweeping staircase, remove her clothing and climb into the Xsara, naked. Only she isn't naked and you don't even get the very best computer-generated image of her as if she were naked. Lazy thinking, sloppy commercial.

5. AMARETTO DI SARONNO: PARTY
When will they learn? Lowest-common-denominator pan-European advertising: throw in a few glamorous Eurotrash types, have them bray hysterically at each other's jokes, and mix in product (alcohol) shots over plinky-plonk soundtrack.

6. FERRERO ROCHER: FAMILY PARTY
The ambassador has clearly hit impoverished times. Instead, assorted escapees from a local asylum celebrate a porticoed house by building a Ferrero tree and smiling inanely. So soft-focus it could be a porn movie.

7. NORWICH UNION: RED BRACES
It's supposed to be about real people celebrating affluence and security. How many yuppie garden gnomes have you ever met that sport red braces?

8. PERSIL: TABLETS
I don't even know where to begin. Once again "real" consumers are filmed endorsing the product. You could have done it better on your Handycam. Yet the product is a sensible idea that deserves success.

9. JOHN SMITH'S: ORDINARY BLOKE
The advertiser has dispensed with its celebrity endorser (Jack Dee), replacing him with a cardboard cut-out of an ordinary bloke, because John Smith's is so good it doesn't need a celebrity. It does.

10. AMERICA ONLINE
The wooden, nauseating family waxing lyrical about the Internet while loads of computer text scroll down the mother's clothes has plenty to put me off using the Net.

● *Stefano Hatfield is the Editor of* Campaign.

Who needs sex? It's something for nothing that sells

Promotions and Diana were the circulation winners of 1998

Ask journalists who have worked on the national tabloids for years what sells newspapers — Editors such as Neil Wallis at the *Sunday People* or Colin Myler at the *Sunday Mirror* — and they will answer in three words: sex and football. "It's an unbeatable combination," Wallis says.

Brian MacArthur

Winter week by winter week, that may be true, but what moved newspapers fastest off the newsagents' shelves in 1998, according to *Paper Round's* annual survey of the year's bestselling stories and promotions, were promises of money, something for nothing or special supplements or Diana, Princess of Wales — at least until the anniversary of her death in September, when the nation at last decided to let her rest in peace.

Two papers top the 1998 bestseller list. The biggest boost in *volume* of sales was won by the *Daily Mail* when it launched its 12-week Saturday Diana partwork in January and achieved an increase of 415,000 on the previous week. By March 7, after offering a Diana video, a Diana rose and a free poster, Saturday sales had risen to 3,386,110, the highest in the paper's history.

The biggest *percentage* increase — 18 per cent — was achieved by *The Mirror* when it serialised in March the story of Trevor Rees-Jones, the bodyguard who was injured in the Paris crash. Sales lifted by 387,000 on the first day and an extra 1.4 million copies were sold during the week.

The *News of the World* and *The Sun* also did well from Diana, as did *The Mail on Sunday* when it serialised Penny Junor's biography of the *Prince of Wales*, and achieved the second-highest sale recorded so far, an increase over the previous week of 219,000 copies, lifting it to 2,567,500.

Christmas television listings were winners for *The Sun* (up 353,000) and the *Sunday People* (up 176,000); the winner for *The Sunday Times* was its annual Rich List. *The Sun*, on the day after England lost to Argentina in the World Cup, and the *Sunday Mirror* with an *Only Fools and Horses* video and World Cup coins did well from football; yet again *The Sun* raced home with the Grand National; and cheap Ryanair flights scored for *The Sun* and *News of the World*. Three of the top ten *Sun* bestsellers featured football.

Yet the marketing-led promotions that sold most extra newspapers in 1998 were offers of money and appeals to the gambling instinct. *The Sun* and *News of the World* vied with *The Mirror* and *Sunday Mirror* with Moneybags, achieving sales lifts of more than 250,000. The *Daily Mail* joined in in September with Lucky Wallets. This promotion was genuinely different: every reader could win a prize. Sales rose by an average of 126,300 copies a day, and by almost 250,000 for *The Mail on Sunday*. Soon after *The Sun* and *News of the World* joined in with Every One's A Winner.

The most successful marketing stratagem of the past five years, a cut in cover price, has doubled the sale of *The Times*, and *The Daily Telegraph* has enlisted 271,500 pre-paid subscribers at less than the cover price. Five years on, however, cutting cover prices has diminishing power and works most successfully as a one-off tactic.

The single biggest sales increase of the year was won by *The Mirror* when it cut its price on September 26 from 32p to 10p. It put on 475,000, an increase of nearly 17 per cent. *The Times* boosted sales by 261,000 (33 per cent) on Saturday, January 10, when it introduced its new magazine and reduced the cover price to 20p. Its second and third highest increases were for a *Titanic* supplement (up 91,000 on a Saturday) and a reprint of 1912 *Titanic* reports (up 105,000 on a Monday).

The top 20 is dominated by three newspaper groups — Associated Newspapers, publishers of the *Daily Mail* and *The Mail on Sunday*, News International, owners of *The Sun*, *News of the World*, *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*, and the Mirror Group, with *The Mirror*, *Sunday Mirror* and the *Sunday People*. They are the big hitters, using big marketing budgets for promotion deals and television advertising to boost sales.

Success for other newspapers comes in smaller doses. *The Express* had its best boost from a gardening supplement that put on 120,000 (8 per cent). The group's other successes were based on sporting promotions: *The Express* added 72,000 in August for football fixtures, *The Express on Sunday* gained 126,000 in January in promoting sport, and World Cup magazines added 64,000 for *The Express on Sunday* and 38,000 for the *Daily Star* (7 per cent). A Panini World Cup stickers promotion gave *The Observer* its best Sunday.

The Budget delivered the highest increases of the year for *The Guardian* (up 60,000) and *The Daily Telegraph* (up 21,000). *The Sunday Telegraph*, paradoxically, had its best sale on January 4 when it raised its cover price. *The Independent* prefers not to disclose its successes, but it is a safe guess that it has its best days in August when it lists university vacancies.

The top 20 demonstrates the crucial role of marketeers in maintaining and boosting newspaper sales. *The Sunday Times* hit its highest sale for years on October 4 when it offered a BSkyB digital magazine, a wine guide and Woodrow Wyatt's diaries. *The Times* added 397,000 in sales in one week of September when it promoted an easyJet offer and Richard Branson's autobiography. Divide that by six and average sales for the week are up by 66,000. Divide it by 24 and average monthly sales are up by 16,000. With the intense competition among British newspapers, such increases really matter.

They matter still more when set in the context of declining newspaper sales. The good news is that the British still buy more than 13 million national newspapers a day and more than 14 million on Sundays. The bad news is that year-on-year sales in November were down by 150,000 on weekdays — and by 770,000 on Sundays (which is really bad news). Without all those promotions, the news would be a lot worse.

MOST SUCCESSFUL PROMOTIONS OF 1998

[illegible]	415,094	14.5	24/1	Diana partwork
[illegible]	387,000	18	2/3	Trevor Rees-Jones
The Sun	353,000	10	26/11	Christmas TV
News of the World	307,000	7	18/1	Diana supplement
The Sun	289,000	[illegible]	[illegible]	Moneybags
Sunday Mirror	279,000	413	25/1	Moneybags
[illegible]	261,000	33	10/1	New magazine/20p
[illegible]	257,000	9	24/1	Moneybags
[illegible]	256,000	6	8/2	Moneybags
[illegible]	250,000	11	6/9	Lucky Wallets
Mail on Sunday	249,000	9	25/10	Penny Junor on Prince Charles
Sunday Times	222,000	17	[illegible]	Rich List
The Sun	[illegible]	6	[illegible]	England lose to Argentina
The Sun	209,000	5	4/4	Grand National
News of the World	191,000	4.5	25/10	Every One's a Winner
The Sun	189,000	5	2/3	Ryanair cheap flights
News of the World	188,000	4	1/3	Ryanair cheap flights
The Sun	183,000	5	21/8	Diana supplement
Sunday People	176,000	11	6/12	Christmas TV
Sunday Mirror	169,000	9	15/4	World Cup/Only Fools and Horses video



Special supplements on Diana, Princess of Wales, and promises of money or prizes were the two subjects which moved newspapers fastest off the the newsagents' shelves last year

Drama ahead as media supply outstrips demand

Raymond Snoddy

With all the fuss over the millennium, you might be mistaken in thinking that 1999 will be a transitional year, a pointer to more exciting times. Not so for the media, with the year likely to produce a higher than average amount of drama and crises.

Reality will shed light on some of the more ambitious flights of technological fancy. The biggest reality test will be that applied to digital television — both satellite and terrestrial — launched just a few months ago with parties and fireworks. Right now, it is a phoney war. Equipment is in short supply and both SkyDigital and ONdigital can justly boast of "fantastic" interest and black boxes that are walking off the shelves. But once the "early adopters" and techno-freaks have had their appetite for 100 channels of TV satisfied, we will start to learn just how deep is the desire for extra choice, much of it in the form of marginal channels. If the public turns out to be stubborn, unimpressed or wary, watch for the first managerial sacrifices before the summer holidays end.

This will also be the year in which we find out if Lord Hollick can do more than stabilise *The Express* — holding the circulation decline to manageable levels. Or can the patient rise from its sickbed?

As the life-and-death struggle continues, media watchers — in London, at least — will be diverted by the launch of two "free" daily newspapers. News International, owner of *The Times*, will aim a new title at what it hopes is the soft underbelly of the *Evening Standard's* near monopoly of classified advertising in the capital. Associated Newspapers, which owns the *Evening Standard*, will try to protect its other flank by launching a free morning edition. Delicious shades of an old-fashioned press war provides proof that the Internet is not entirely dominating new product areas — not yet. If things start to flag, there will be the diversion of blood sport as the BBC tries to find a new director-general.

Recent research by the Henley Centre pointed to a problem that could come to a head this year. The consultants tracked what they have called "the attention economy" — the time and money *consumers* are prepared to spend on the media, in all its forms, in relation to the supply of media products. The researchers discovered "a Niagara of supply" measured against only "a pint-glass of demand".

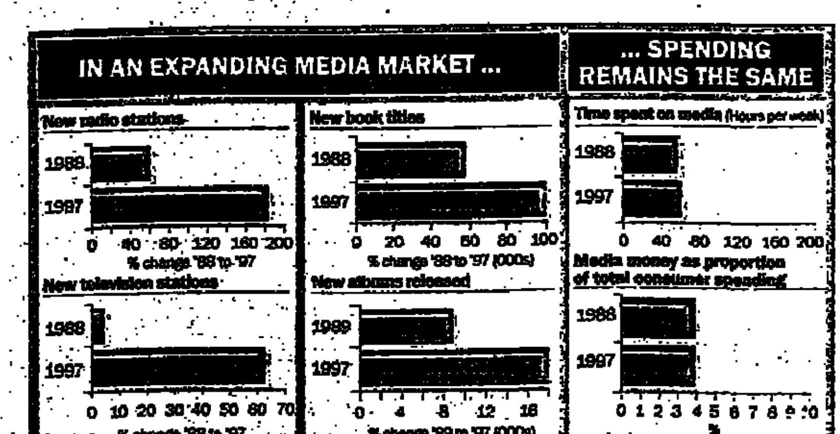
The trend is well-known but figures for the past decade are startling nonetheless. Between 1989 and 1997, there was a 1,525 per cent rise in the number of television stations and a 213 per cent growth in radio stations. The number of book titles was up by 77 per cent and new albums up 114 per cent; new magazine titles were up only 19 per cent.

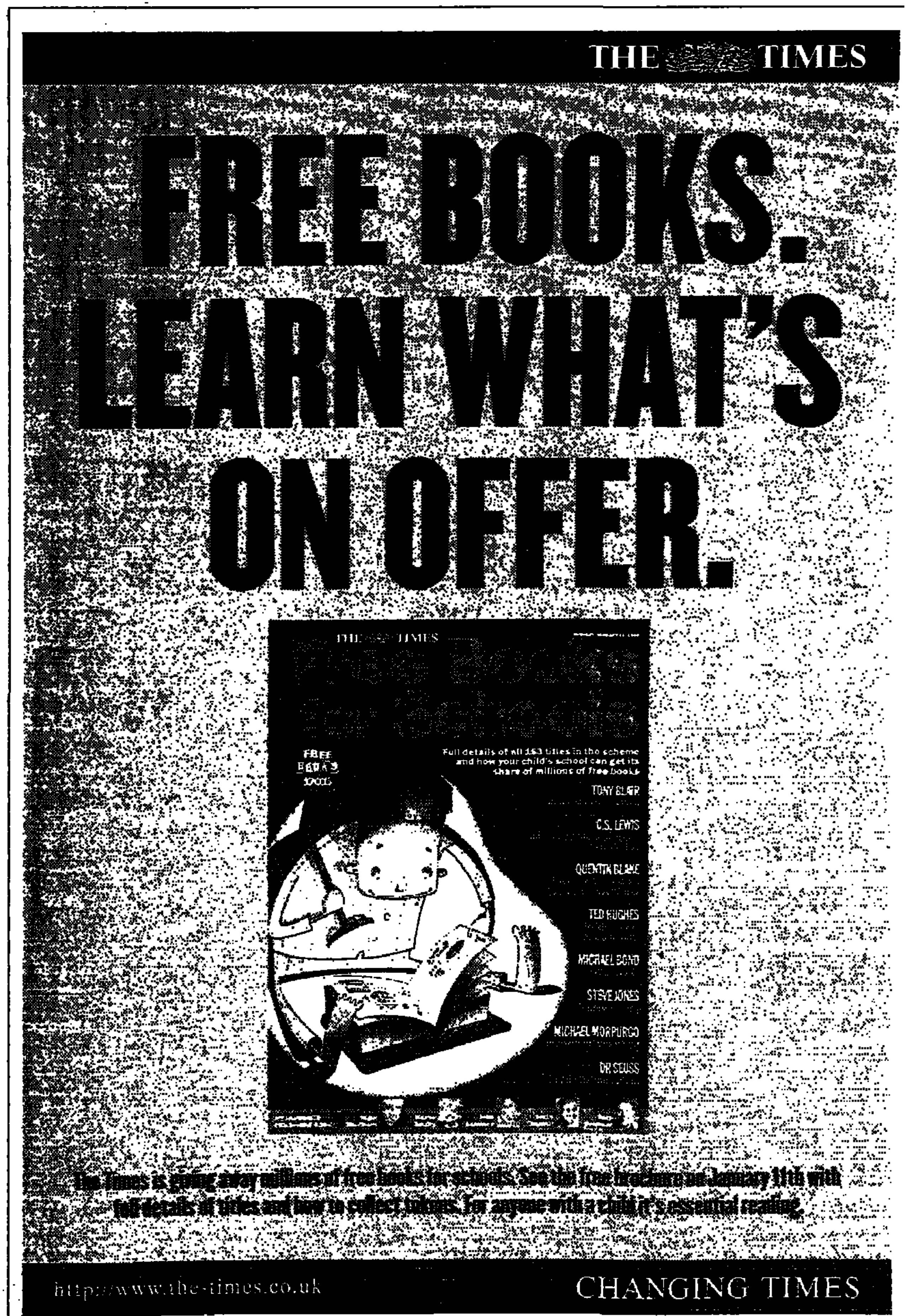
Remarkably, the Henley Centre found that over the past decade the amount of time an individual spent interacting with the media hardly budged at all from 60 hours a week — or, in terms of money, from 4 per cent of consumer spending.

Despite all the new channels and media offerings, the forecast for 1999 is for an increase in time spent with the media of only six minutes a person a week and £8 extra spending a year. This amounts to little more than two visits to the cinema or eight Sunday newspapers. Such benchmark figures must induce an instant reality factor, not to mention sobriety.

It gets worse for some sections of the media in this battle for consumers' time and money. The Henley Centre estimates that in 1999 the consumer will devote six minutes less a week to reading compared with last year and 24 minutes less to viewing. But it predicts that a consumer will spend 18 minutes more listening, and 18 more with interactive media. The money breakdown is: £7 a year more spent on viewing; £2 more on interacting; £1 less on listening; no change for reading.

The news is worst of all for newspapers. It is the only medium in which the researchers predict loss of both consumer time and money this year. As the consultants warn us: it's a fight for survival. There is no danger that 1999 will be a boring year for the media.





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AIB GOVETT UNIT TRUST LTD				
0171 378 7979 Dealing: 0171 407 7999				
Protected Funds				
UK Safeguard	142.10	151.42	- 0.46	
-do- NAV to Jan 18	135.00	135.00	...	...
UK Equity Safeguard	114.00	121.93†	- 0.34	2.02
-do- NAV to Mar 19	110.98	110.98	.	
US Eqy Safeguard	93.51	99.42†	.	
Cash	957.25	962.02	..	6.25
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Gen	427.85	453.52	- 0.51	1.80
UK Small Cos	80.63	86.23	+ 0.43	0.58
FTSE 250 Index	97.85	104.43	- 3.39	1.89
Geared UK Index	#23.437	#24.741	- 0.46	5.75
Income Funds				
Corp Bd	87.20	92.10	+ 0.11	6.88
Monthly Inc	44.46	47.55†	- 0.79	7.98
International Funds				
American Gen	371.99	392.45	+ 5.85	0.17
American Strat	165.64	176.75	+ 3.82	.
JG US Index	#27.927	#29.423	.	4.50
European Gen	429.96	456.00†	+ 1.89	.
European Strat	193.31	207.16†	- 2.76	
Japan Gen	104.81	110.57	- 0.26	.
Asia Pacific	61.45	65.69†	+ 1.35	1.69
Pacific Strat	85.97	91.94	+ 1.57	.
Greater China	152.72	163.34	+ 2.53	
Latin America	59.19	63.30	- 0.47	
Int Growth	189.07	202.04	+ 3.63	0.11
Balanced Exempt	182.32	188.94	- 8.56	2.18
Global Strategy	43.57	46.60	+ 1.12	
AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS				
01203 553 231				
AXA Equity & Law Unit Trust				
Balanced Acc	82.88	88.17	+ 0.15	1.67
Balanced Inc	74.45	79.20	- 0.13	1.67
Brit Exempt	130.40	138.78†	- 0.10	2.35
Brit Fndmtls Acc	168.40	179.20	- 0.40	3.88
Brit Fndmtls Inc	104.40	111.10	- 0.30	3.88
Europe	568.20	604.50	- 2.20	0.60
General Acc	951.30	1012.00	- 1.00	2.41
General Inc	761.70	810.30	- 0.80	2.41
Gilts/Fxd Int Acc	271.10	286.30	- 1.10	4.86
[illegible]				

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
CANADA LIFE MGMT (UK) LTD				
01707 622 109				
Can Gen Dist	303.60	321.80	- 1.90	1.04
-do- Income Dist	168.70	178.80†	- 2.00	2.76
-do- Accum	580.90	615.70†	- 8.80	2.76
Gilt & Fxd Int	49.25	51.75	+ 0.19	3.82
Growth Units	363.40	380.50	- 4.00	1.30
Bond	208.30	219.90	+ 1.10	4.50
Int Growth	271.30	286.50	+ 4.08	0.11
North American	416.70	442.10	+ 8.30	
Far East	177.00	189.30	+ 1.10	0.92
UK Smaller Cos	248.30	265.60	+ 1.30	1.28
European	139.10	148.10	+ 1.60	0.14
Japanese Growth	28.73	30.40	+ 0.16	
High Income	294.40	314.90	- 3.50	2.79
CAPEL-CURE MYERS UT MGMT LTD				
0181 831 7433 Enq 0181 831 7433 Dlg 0181 831 7455				
American & Gen	353.00	373.30	+ 5.50	..
European Inc	151.30	160.90	+ 1.40	
Smaller Cos (4-T)	105.26	111.88	+ 4.54	2.26
Growth	731.30	778.00	- 7.50	1.23
Income & Growth #	588.50	626.10	- 3.10	4.35
-do- Accum #	957.20	1018.40	- 5.10	4.35
Japan & Gen	49.44	52.25	+ 0.23	.
Halbmark Gwth	1600.00	1751.00	- 9.00	0.92
-do- Accum	2137.00	2227.00	- 16.00	0.92
Special Sits	169.20	180.00	- 1.70	1.22
High Yield	1900.00	1959.00§	- 21.00	3.80
CAZENOVE UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD				
0171 606 0708				
Cazenove Portfolio	123.93	131.82	.	2.07
American Portfolio	202.66	215.11		0.23
European Portfolio	211.34	225.63		0.24
High Income	59.84	63.15		5.78
Japanese Portfolio	46.08	46.80	. .	
Pacific Portfolio	102.56	110.29	. .	1.78
UK Equity	127.07	129.14		1.71
UK Equity & Bd	72.79	77.13	. .	5.19
UK Smlr Cos	48.17	51.46		2.39
CBF CHURCH OF ENGLAND FUNDS				
[illegible]				

[illegible]

0171 266 3020
PR 24 HOURS A DAY
Lloyds Avenue House, 6 Lloyds Avenue, London EC3N 3EH

[illegible]

Source FT Information

هكذا من الاصل

Shares close off their lows

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
646	385	Allied Domecq	554½	– 2	4.6	14.5
412½	291½	Bulmer (HP)	339	...	5.6	14.8
42½	7	[illegible]	18½	...	...	...
795	432	Diageo	684	– 21	2.3	20.7
900	685	[illegible]	687½	...	2.6	18.7
325	225	Highland Distill	265	...	4.4	12.2
244	115	[illegible]	242	...	6.7	8.2
59½	18½	[illegible]	[illegible]	...	...	...
2071½	725	SA Breweries	1086½	+ 16½	3.4	13.3

BANKS

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

BUILDING MATERIALS

CHEMICALS

CONSTRUCTION

DISTRIBUTORS

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

ELECTRICITY

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

ENGINEERING

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

HEALTHCARE

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

INSURANCE

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

LEISURE & HOTELS

MEDIA

MINING

OIL & GAS

OTHER FINANCIAL

PHARMACEUTICALS

PRINTING & PAPER

PROPERTY

RETAILERS, FOOD

RETAILERS, GENERAL

SUPPORT SERVICES

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

TRANSPORT

WATER

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

LONGS (over 15 years)

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HARGREAVES LANSDOWN

Western business under threat from Islamic backlash

By Carl Mortished
International Business Editor

AN Islamic backlash against the recent US and British attacks on Iraq will pose a threat to Western businesses in 1999, raising the prospect of further terrorist attacks in Egypt and growing unrest in Turkey.

A report by Merchant International Group (MIG), a consultancy which specialises political, economic and security risks, predicts that the bombing of Iraq will escalate the growth of Islamic terrorism. MIG sees the recent deaths in the Yemen as evidence of the beginnings of a campaign aimed at Westerners doing business or travelling in the region.

MIG claimed yesterday that a representative of Ozama bin Laden, the Saudi Arabian accused of funding terrorist attacks from Afghanistan, was recently sent to Syria to consult with members of Hamas. According to MIG, the purpose of the meeting was to plan attacks on British and American citizens.

The organisation also predicts further terrorist activity from the Algerian GIA and the Egyptian group Al-Gama'at-Islamiyya. In Egypt, efforts by the Government to reduce the Islamic content of the eductational system and to reduce the influence of religious scholars will also cause friction.

More alarming is MIG's prediction of an increase in religious tension in Turkey. Stuart Poole-Robb, chief executive of MIG, explained that the Turkish Government had been taking measures to curb the spread of Islamic culture and teaching. He said: "Things are going to get out of hand. I don't think it will be as aggressive as Egypt but I do think there will be protests. There is a fear that there could be a Taliban-inspired Islamic extremist backlash."

Turkey's recent overtures to Israel are expected to fuel the protests and increase tension with Syria. The latter will find itself sandwiched between Turkey and Israel, two pro-Western states, and Syria has been supporting Kurdish separatists in Turkey.

MIG monitors the activities of some 42 terrorist groups as well as 5,000 criminal organisations and advises companies on how to avoid such risks.

In contrast, MIG now believs Iran is becoming a safer place to do business and predicts that Italy, France and the UK will upgrade their diplomatic relations with the country. Mr Poole-Robb said: "In 1999 we will see significant changes. With Rafsanjani and Khatami working in tandem, they are doing all they can to attract foreign direct investment."

Elsewhere, MIG points to the potential of armed conflict between Morocco and Algeria over disputed southern territory, with the former country purchasing weaponry from both Russia and South Africa.

Boeing lifts deliveries to beat projections

From a Correspondent in Seattle

A TROUBLED year for Boeing ended on an upbeat note when the company announced the delivery of a record 550 aircraft for the year, meeting its 1998 goal and exceeding a recent projection that it would deliver 546 aircraft.

Boeing suffered a series of setbacks in 1998, forcing it to cut production and jobs in response to Asian economic problems and competition from Airbus Industrie, its only significant competitor.

But Alan Mulally, newly named president of the commercial airplane division, Boeing's largest group, said the company's success in meeting the production goal and its expectations of beating it in 1999 by delivering about 620 jetliners showed the "production system is starting to get healthy again."

Mr Mulally took the reins of the commercial airplane division from Ron Woodard in September as part of a sweeping reorganisation. Under Mr Woodard the division tried to nearly triple production over three years, but its plants, staffed with many newly hired workers, were overwhelmed by parts shortages, forcing Boeing to halt work on two assembly lines.

Since September Boeing has given warning of lower earnings in the coming year and announced plans to eliminate up to 38,000 jobs by the end of 1999 and an additional 10,000 jobs in 2000. Its workforce peaked at 238,000 in June 1998. Mr Mulally said the Asian economic crisis should have less of an impact on the group this year as fewer deliveries are scheduled to Asian airlines.

Small IFAs face fines after missing pensions deadline

By Marianne Curphey

MORE than 100 small independent financial advisers (IFAs) have missed the important deadline to organise redress for clients in the first stage of the pensions mis-selling review, the Personal Investment Authority said last night.

Firms were obliged to submit details of compensation offered to people who were mis-sold personal pension plans in the 1980s and who are now retired or close to retirement by December 31.

The IFAs had to send in documents showing how they had calculated compensation and how many cases they had dealt with.

The PIA said yesterday that it had received a considerable number of forms in the past few days as IFAs rushed to send in their returns.

Many small firms brought in staff over the Christmas and new year period in an attempt to meet the deadline, and all of the 41 biggest pension providers — among them many household names — have met the deadline already.

The PIA issued a stern warning earlier this week that it would not hesitate to issue fines to firms that missed the deadline, which was set in spring 1997.

A spokeswoman said: "We are receiving the final pieces of information and seeking figures and details of caseloads. By the end of next week we will have a clear picture of who has missed the deadline, and will then begin to examine whether or not they have a valid excuse."

Last month Patricia Hewitt, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, took a tough line against pension providers and IFAs, some of which she accused of dragging their feet.



Patricia Hewitt has taken a tough line against pension providers and IFAs, and accused some of dragging their feet

Last year more than 600 small IFA firms missed the initial deadline because of problems filling in forms or compiling data.

The PIA said that it had not ruled out "naming and shaming" and fining the principals of independent financial advisers that consistently missed deadlines.

Some see the introduction of the proposed stakeholder pension — announced last month — as an indication that the Government has lost patience with high-charging insurance companies.

According to calculations by Lane Clark & Peacock, the consulting actuary, however, the average value of the stakeholder pension could be just £50 a week.

David Lane, one of the firm's partners, said that the sum could be even less if the investment funds performed badly, or if investors could not afford to save more than £100 a month. An individual now aged 30 paying £100 a month for the next 30 years could end up with the £50 a week pension, he said.

"Stakeholder pensions do not provide any guarantees. Individuals will be subject to the vagaries of the stock market, the effects of inflation and the prevailing price of annuities at retirement."

Microsoft launches attack on witness

From Oliver August in New York

MICROSOFT has launched a pre-emptive strike against the first government witness to be called when the historic antitrust trial resumes after the Christmas recess.

William Harris, the chief executive of Inuit, the leading personal finance software maker, is expected to give details of the arm-twisting he suffered at Microsoft's hands. His written testimony was prepared for release this week.

In a stinging personal attack on Mr Harris, Microsoft said: "Mr Harris's testimony is rife with rank speculation, hypothetical situations and attempts at complex legal, technical and economic analysis by a witness who is neither an attorney, a software developer, nor an economist."

The animosity between Microsoft and Mr Harris harks back to the software group's repeated attempts to take over Inuit. Mr Harris was able to fight off the attempts with the help of the Justice Department which is now prosecuting the Microsoft case.

The takeover attempts were vetoed by the government regulators because Microsoft already offers a personal finance package called Money. The Inuit product, Quicken, is the market leader.

Mr Harris will follow the example of executives from AOL, Sun Microsystems, Netscape and Intel who have all testified against Microsoft. Another witness, Scott Cook, the former Inuit chairman, even accused Bill Gates, the Microsoft chairman, of attempted bribery.

In 1996 Mr Gates sent an e-mail to Mr Cook, offering to do a favour "that would cost us something like $1 [million] to do in return for switching browsers in the next few months".

Microsoft's Internet Explorer browser is directly competing with Netscape's Navigator.

The trial will resume on Monday, ending the recess that started on December 16. The trial has already lasted longer than lawyers had anticipated. The judge originally wanted to finish hearing testimonies before Christmas.



Gates: pre-emptive strike

THE SUNDAY TIMES

RAPE OR ROMANCE?

She was his schoolteacher, he was only 12. Now they've got two children, and she's got seven years ...
The Sunday Times Magazine this weekend

PLUS

Art trail: Charles Saatchi gives us a private view of the new neurotic realism movement, the hottest new art in Britain today

Glamour: bimbos are no longer required in the revamped Miss World, but the girls are still busting for a sash

THE SUNDAY TIMES *IS* THE SUNDAY PAPERS

Russian GDP shrinks by 5.5%

By Alasdair Murray
Economics Correspondent

THE Russian Government yesterday admitted that the country's economy had shrunk at its fastest rate since the end of the Soviet era.

Revealing the full extent of the damage wreaked by the economic crisis which has engulfed the country, the Economics Ministry revealed statistics showing that Russian GDP contracted by 5.5 per cent in 1998.

Annual inflation has also soared to nearly 85 per cent, while trade, heavily dependent on oil exports, declined by 13.6 per cent. The Russian currency, the rouble, has lost nearly 70 per cent of its value since it became the target of speculators in late summer.

The depressing data was released as one of the country's largest banks moved one step closer to becoming the first substantial financial services company to go into liquidation since the crisis began.

Tokobank, once one of Russia's 20 largest finance houses, was ruled bankrupt by a Moscow court with $363 million (£213 million) of debt against assets of just $165 million.

Anagen property move another biotech blow

By Saeed Shah

THE crisis in the UK biotechnology sector deepened yesterday when Anagen gave up on micro-organisms research and launched an agreed bid for a property company, to be paid for in shares.

Gander Holdings, which has residential property in London's Kensington and Chelsea, agreed to the deal to take advantage of Anagen's tax losses, which stand at more than £27 million. Future profits can be offset against these tax losses to avoid paying tax.

Anagen has been a shell company since its automated immuno-assay technology proved unsuccessful and it was delisted from the stock market in April 1997.

The offer is on the basis of one Anagen share for every Gander share, and 512 million new Anagen shares will be issued to Gander shareholders.

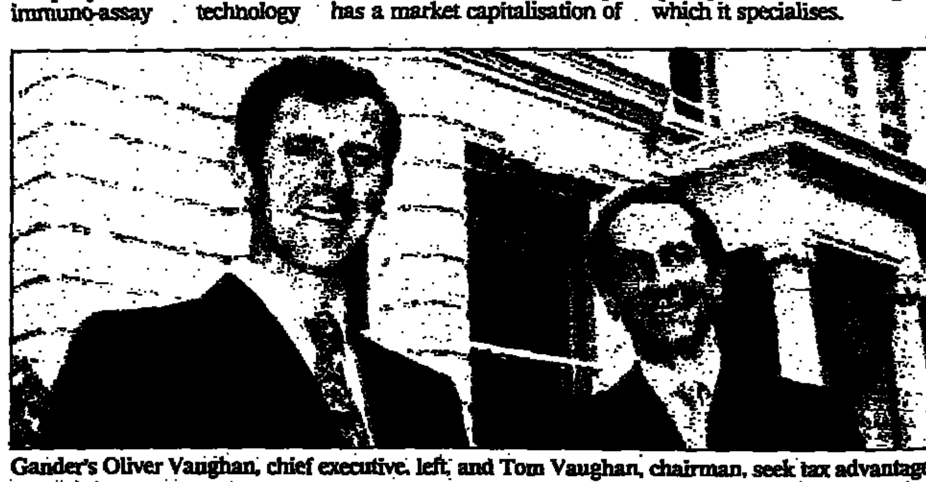
The enlarged group will be called Gander Properties and will include all the Gander board. The current members of the Anagen board, except William Cairns, chairman, and Kim Martin, will resign without compensation.

Gander, whose shares closed on Wednesday at 6½p, has a market capitalisation of about £35 million — a little more than half its net asset value of £66 million.

In August Gander bought Barrasford, a similar property company, for £24.4 million.

Gander said in its interim statement in October that it expects to make losses in the years ending January 1, 1999 and 2000.

In a joint statement, Gander and Anagen said that the prospects for Gander, as enlarged by the Barrasford acquisition, are encouraging and strong demand continues for the high-quality residential lettings in which it specialises.



Gander's Oliver Vaughan, chief executive, left, and Tom Vaughan, chairman, seek tax advantages

Customers can keep number when changing provider

Mobile users given portability

By Sarah Cunningham

MOBILE phone users can expect to be bombarded with advertising and special offers over the coming weeks as their service providers seek to retain their loyalty and to recruit subscribers from rival companies after the advent today of mobile number portability.

Number portability will allow customers to switch from one network operator to another and take their existing mobile phone number with them.

Orange said that it would be launching an advertising campaign to support mobile number portability. Bob Fuller, the group's chief operating officer, said: "For the first time consumers will be offered real choice and will be able to vote with their feet if they are dissatisfied, unconstrained by the problems of having to change their number.

"We will be vigorously pursuing those customers who may be dissatisfied with their present network, making it both easy and simple to join Orange."

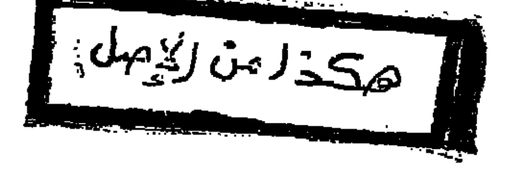
For customers who switch their existing number to One 2 One between today and the end of March, the company is offering up to £100 back on the second bill following transfer.

Both Vodafone and Cellnet are relying on their existing offers for the moment.

David Edmonds, the Director-General of Telecommunications, said that number portability "will encourage much more intense competition in the mobile market as the four companies fight to win and retain customers". The Oftel chief added: "In the end the winner will be the customer."

The operators will be allowed to charge customers to cover the costs of transferring the numbers but this is not expected to be more than a one-off charge of £25.

A spokesman for Vodafone said that Oftel and the service providers had been working for the past 12 months to ensure that the technology is ready for the increased volume of people switching servers that the change will bring.



Boots to take on 100 staff

Boots The Chemist is taking on 100 staff to train as specialised consultants in preparation for the launch next month of three ranges of French skincare products. The advisers will offer skincare consultations in a specially designed area of 90 stores, next to the pharmacy.

The products include a range from Laboratoires Dermatologiques Lutsia, a French business bought in 1996 by Boots Healthcare International, the non-prescription medicine division of the Boots group. All the brands aim to bridge the gap between medicinal and cosmetic products.

Korean bank sale

A US investment consortium took control of the ailing Korea First Bank (KFB) yesterday in the first significant foreign acquisition of a South Korean financial heavyweight. The consortium, led by Newbridge Capital, which was selected ahead of HSBC Holdings, agreed to buy a 51 per cent stake in KFB for an undetermined price. Officials said the deal would help South Korea to introduce advanced banking skills into the industry, which has been marred by corruption and uncontrolled lending.

Ulster gold

Northern Ireland is set for a gold rush after Omagh Minerals won a licence to mine the precious metal in the province. The mine, near Omagh, will employ about 60 people when it opens later this year. The company expects to mine about 50,000 tonnes of ore a year.

AT&T wins approval for $32bn TCI deal

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

The $32 billion (£19 billion) takeover of TCI, the second-biggest US television cable operator, by AT&T, the leading phone company, has received the go-ahead from the Justice Department.

To win approval, the two companies agreed to divest TCI's 23 per cent stake in Sprint PCS, which offers mobile-phone services in direct competition to AT&T.

TCI will not have to sell its stake immediately but has to sign control over to a trustee who then has five years to sell the stake valued at more than $2 billion.

The Justice Department approval clears the way for the creation of a new type of telecoms group which combines orthodox phone lines and sophisticated fibre-optic lines with a view to building a network that can deliver phone, television and computer services into homes.

Michael Armstrong, the AT&T chief executive, negotiated the TCI deal soon after his appointment last year. Wall Street views his vision of one integrated network as an ambitious bet that could either bankrupt AT&T or give it the monolithic position it enjoyed in the telephone sector before being broken up by the regulators in 1984.

AT&T's competitors had lobbied the Justice Department not to allow the resurrection of an all-powerful AT&T. But the regulators took the view that competition was strong in the telecoms sector and that companies such as WorldCom MCI are poised to follow Mr Armstrong's lead.

AT&T itself repeatedly pointed to the immense investments necessary to build the envisioned network. Analysts estimate that AT&T will have to spend about $5 billion on hardware alone.

After flexing its muscles early in 1998 when merger mania was in full flow, the Justice Department has now returned to its more docile ways. Earlier this week it approved the BP-Amoco deal. The regulator's biggest casualty last year was the scuppered takeover of Northrop Grumman by Lockheed Martin.

Michael Armstrong, left, agreed the takeover with the TCI chairman, John Malone, in June

ICI sale to Enron completed

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

ENRON, the US power company, boosted its interests in the UK yesterday with the completion of a £300 million deal to buy ICI's Teesside utility interests.

The purchase, first announced in November, gives Enron an operation that supplies large industrial customers with gas, electricity and support services. The interests include a power station, water treatment plant, rail tracks and more than 1,760 acres of land. More than 550 staff will be transferred to Enron.

ICI's decision to sell the business — on which it estimates it will make a £120 million post-tax gain — is part of its overhaul of operations to shift away from industrial chemicals and industrial divisions to focus on speciality products, coatings and materials.

The company said it will use the sale proceeds to reduce debt, which stands at £4.4 billion.

Executives at E*Trade get $100m present

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

EXECUTIVES at E*Trade, the second-biggest US online brokerage, have given themselves a Christmas present worth $100 million (£60 million) after repricing their share options.

According to Securities & Exchange Commission documents, the company rewrote option schemes when Internet shares were at a low in October. Since then, the sector has staged a stunning return to new heights.

E*Trade's share price rose from a low of $17, when the options were repriced, to $60, swept along by Wall Street's keen interest in any company associated with the Internet.

Of E*Trade's 700 employees about two thirds are said to have share options. How many benefited from the repricing is not known. Top executives, including Christos Cotsakos, the president, received 550,000 options each last year.

The company reported to the SEC that a total of 3.5 million shares were affected by the repricing move. The paper gains generated in the process are estimated at more than $100 million.

In most option schemes the recipients have to wait for several years to benefit from the gains. But the E*Trade scheme, which is not unusual in the get-rich-quick Internet sector, vests at a rate of 25 per cent a year.

While such a system would be viewed as an assault on shareholder value in most other companies, the E*Trade shareholders are unlikely to complain very loudly.

They too have benefited from the near quadrupling of the share price and probably do not want to rock the cash-laden boat, analysts said.

In an attempt to show a degree of modesty, the company made it known that the repriced options would have their vesting periods reset so that nobody could cash out immediately.

To prevent a repricing at a temporary share price low, most traditional company remuneration committees have policies on when and how quickly option schemes can be adjusted.

Bank unions may merge

Plans for the first industry-wide trade union for banking and building society workers will be put to the vote this month. Three of the main banking unions — the Banking, Insurance and Finance Union, UNiFI and the NatWest Staff Association — will ask their 200,000 members to approve the deal, which has been forged after two years of discussions. If it is endorsed, the super-union will start in May.

	Dec 31 midday	Dec 30 close
AEP	[illegible]	[illegible]
AMP Inc	52	[illegible]
AMR Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
AT & T	[illegible]	[illegible]
Abbott Labs	[illegible]	[illegible]
Advanced Micro	[illegible]	[illegible]
Aetna Life	[illegible]	[illegible]
Aflac	45	44
Air Prod & Chem	[illegible]	[illegible]
AirTouch Comm	[illegible]	[illegible]
Albertson's	[illegible]	[illegible]
Alcan Aluminum	[illegible]	[illegible]
Allied Signal	[illegible]	[illegible]
Alum Co of Am	[illegible]	[illegible]
Amerada Hess	[illegible]	[illegible]
Amer Express	104	[illegible]
Amer Genl Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
Amer Home Pr	[illegible]	[illegible]
Amer Intl	[illegible]	[illegible]
Amer Online	[illegible]	[illegible]
Amer Stores	[illegible]	[illegible]
Amer Standard	[illegible]	[illegible]
Ameritech	[illegible]	[illegible]
Amgen	[illegible]	[illegible]
Amoco	[illegible]	[illegible]
Andrew Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
Anheuser-Busch	[illegible]	[illegible]
Apple Computer	[illegible]	[illegible]
Archer Daniels	[illegible]	[illegible]
Armco	[illegible]	[illegible]
Armstrong Wld	[illegible]	[illegible]
Asarco	[illegible]	[illegible]
Atl Richfield	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	15	[illegible]
Auto Data Pro	[illegible]	[illegible]
Avery Dennison	[illegible]	[illegible]
Avon Products	[illegible]	[illegible]
Baker Hughes	[illegible]	[illegible]
Baltim Gas & El	[illegible]	[illegible]
Banc One	52	[illegible]
Bank of NY	[illegible]	[illegible]
BankBoston	[illegible]	[illegible]
Bankers Tr Co	[illegible]	[illegible]
Bausch & Lomb	[illegible]	[illegible]
Baxter Intl	[illegible]	[illegible]
Bectn Dickson	[illegible]	[illegible]
Bell Atlantic	[illegible]	[illegible]
BellSouth	[illegible]	[illegible]
Best Foods	[illegible]	[illegible]
Black & Decker	57	[illegible]
Block (H&R)	[illegible]	[illegible]
Boeing	[illegible]	[illegible]
Eastman Chem	[illegible]	[illegible]
Eastman Kodak	[illegible]	[illegible]
Eaton Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
Edison Intl	[illegible]	[illegible]
Elect Data Syst	[illegible]	[illegible]
Emerson Elec	[illegible]	[illegible]
Engelhard Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
Enron Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
Entergy	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Exxon	[illegible]	[illegible]
FDX Holding	[illegible]	[illegible]
FMC Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
FPL Group	[illegible]	[illegible]
Fifth Third Banc	73	73
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Fluor Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
Ford Motor	[illegible]	[illegible]
Fort James	[illegible]	[illegible]
Fortune Brands	31	[illegible]
Franklin Res	[illegible]	[illegible]
GTE Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
Gannett	[illegible]	[illegible]
Gap Inc Del	[illegible]	[illegible]
Gateway 2000	[illegible]	[illegible]
Gen Dynamics	[illegible]	[illegible]
Gen Electric	[illegible]	[illegible]
Gen Mills	[illegible]	[illegible]
Gen Motors	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Genuine Parts	[illegible]	[illegible]
Georgia Pac	[illegible]	[illegible]
Gillette	[illegible]	[illegible]
Glaxo Wellc ADR	[illegible]	[illegible]
Goodrich (BF)	[illegible]	[illegible]
Goodyear Tire	[illegible]	[illegible]
Great Lakes	[illegible]	[illegible]
Halliburton	[illegible]	[illegible]
Harcourt General	[illegible]	[illegible]
Heinz (HJ)	[illegible]	[illegible]
Hercules	[illegible]	[illegible]
Hershey Foods	[illegible]	[illegible]
Hewlett Packard	[illegible]	70
Hilton Hotels	[illegible]	[illegible]
Home Depot	[illegible]	[illegible]
Homestake Mng	[illegible]	[illegible]
Honeywell	[illegible]	[illegible]
Household Intl	[illegible]	[illegible]
Houston Inds	[illegible]	[illegible]
Humana	[illegible]	[illegible]
Ikon Office	[illegible]	[illegible]
Illinois Tool	[illegible]	[illegible]
Inco	[illegible]	[illegible]
Oracle	[illegible]	[illegible]
Oryx Energy Co	[illegible]	[illegible]
Owens Corning	[illegible]	[illegible]
PPG Industries	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	48	[illegible]
PNC Bank	[illegible]	[illegible]
PP&L Res	[illegible]	[illegible]
Pacificorp	[illegible]	[illegible]
PaineWebber	[illegible]	[illegible]
Pall Corp	[illegible]	32
Parker Hannifin	[illegible]	[illegible]
Peco Energy	[illegible]	[illegible]
Penney (JC)	[illegible]	47
Pennzoil		[illegible]
Pepsico	[illegible]	40
Pfizer	[illegible]	[illegible]
Pharm & Upjhn	[illegible]	[illegible]
Phelps Dodge	[illegible]	51
Philip Morris	[illegible]	[illegible]
Phillips Pet	[illegible]	[illegible]
Pitney Bowes	[illegible]	[illegible]
Polaroid	19	[illegible]
Procter & Gamble	[illegible]	[illegible]
Providian	[illegible]	[illegible]
Pub Serv E & G	[illegible]	[illegible]
Quaker Oats	[illegible]	[illegible]
Ralston Purina	[illegible]	[illegible]
Raychem Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
Raytheon B	[illegible]	[illegible]
Reebok Intl	[illegible]	[illegible]
Reliastar Fin	[illegible]	[illegible]
Reynolds Metals	52	[illegible]
Rockwell Intl	[illegible]	[illegible]
Rohm & Haas	[illegible]	[illegible]
Royal Dutch	[illegible]	[illegible]
Rubbermaid	[illegible]	31
SBC Comms	[illegible]	[illegible]
Safeco Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
St Paul Cos	35	35
Sara Lee Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
Schering Plough	55	[illegible]
Schlumberger	[illegible]	[illegible]
Seagram	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sears Roebuck	[illegible]	41
Shell Trans	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sherwin Wms	[illegible]	[illegible]
Silicon Graphics	[illegible]	[illegible]
Snap-On Tools	[illegible]	[illegible]
Southern Co	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Stanley Works	[illegible]	[illegible]
Starwood H & R	[illegible]	[illegible]
State St Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Answers from page 26

TYMPF
(b) A coin in base silver circulating in Poland and Prussia in the 17th century. It was known as "goldentympf", and was worth 30 groschen despite being stamped only 18. The name became synonymous with "debased coin".
NERF BAR
(c) A special bumper attached to front, back and sides of a modified stock car in order to prevent the wheels of the one car touching the wheels of another car while racing.
PERFECTA
(a) A betting ploy, whereby the gambler must pick the two runners that come first and second in a race, and get them in the right order, to win.
HAGGADAH
(c) A Jewish sacred book containing the Exodus narrative. It is ritually recited at Passover. It is the only Hebrew book with a long and consistent tradition of illustration.
SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE
1 ... Rh1! 2 Qb8 (2 Qxh2 Rxh2+ while 2 Qb6 is also met by 2 ... h5); 2 h5; 3 Qxc8+ Kh7 and Black will emerge the exchange ahead.

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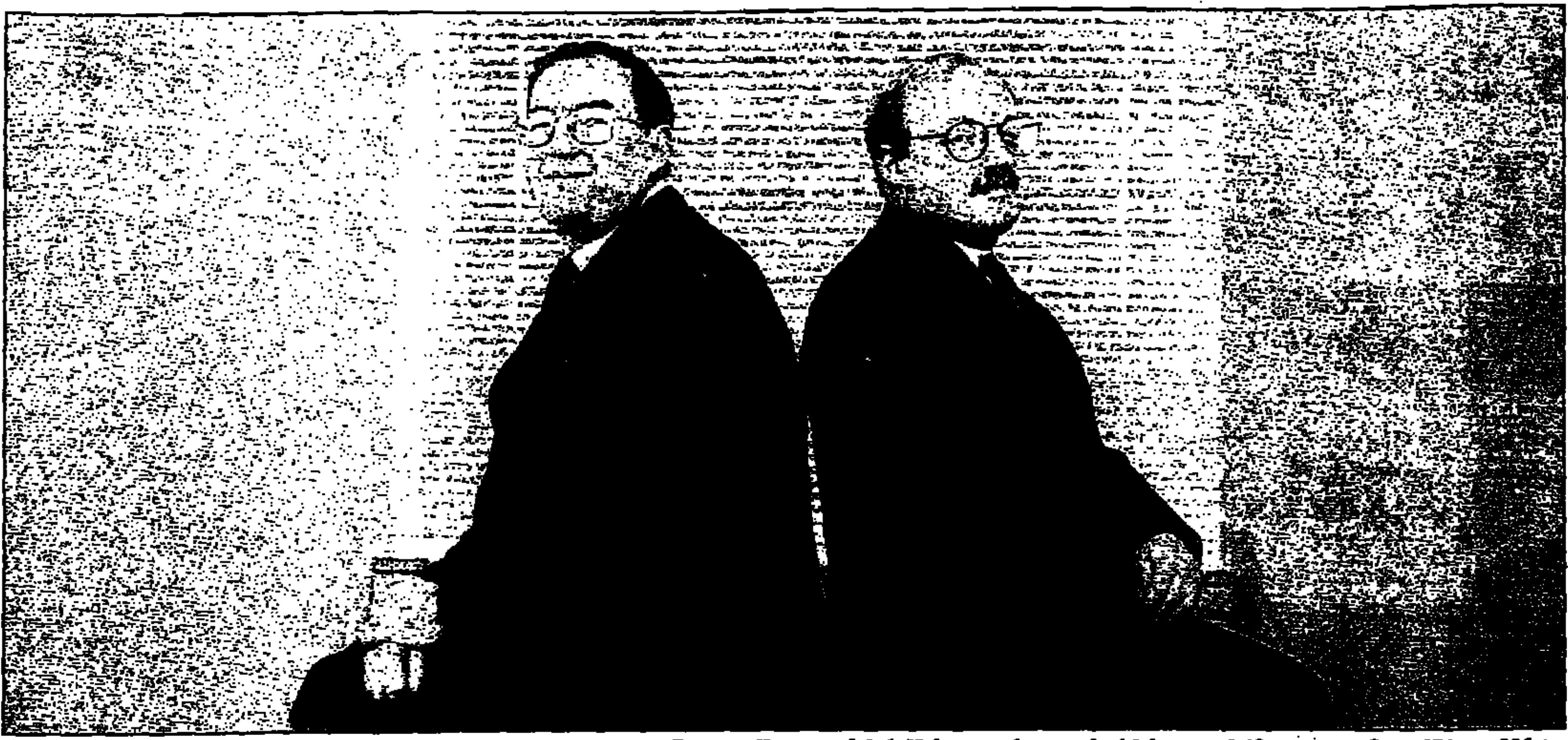
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Winning post: Paul Chisholm, president, left, and Larry Ingeneri, finance director of Colt Telecom, shares of which soared 482 per cent from 154p to 896½p

Colt canters home to cheer investors in City stakes

Michael Clark reports on the winners and losers of this year's stock market steeplechase

Bob Hoskins summed it up in the British Telecom advertising campaign when he uttered the phrase "it's good to talk". Good and certainly profitable if you happen to be one of those City investors who invested heavily in the telecoms sector during 1998.

No fewer than four telecom companies feature in the top 20 best performers, with BT finishing a creditable 30th after a leap of of almost 90 per cent in its share price from 478½p to 905½p.

But the star was Colt Telecom, which was first past the post with a huge lead on its nearest rival. This followed a leap in its share price from 154p to 896½p, a staggering 482 per cent — a move that also catapulted the company into the league of the biggest 100 companies in Britain.

Also in the running was Orange, the mobile phone operator floated a couple of years ago by British Aerospace and Hutchison Whampoa, whose shares grew from 264p to 698½p, or 164 per cent. It was followed by Telewest Communications, a company that also achieved fame as a constituent of the FTSE 100 index before earning a penny profit. It started 1998 at 70p and ended on 173½p, a leap of 147 per cent.

In 13th place came Vodafone, Britain's biggest mobile phone operator, with a surge of 537p to 976p, or 122 per cent.

Not bad performances for investors and certainly more rewarding than if they had chosen to leave their hard-earned savings under the bed.

But it was not all plain sailing and, at one stage, there were doubts that the equity market would achieve any gains on the year at all.

After an encouraging start to 1998, buoyed by takeover fever and gains in the banking sector, investors were soon forced to ponder the collapse in Far Eastern economies. An unexpected rise in domestic interest rates in June, sent the pound soaring, which made life increasingly difficult for manufacturers and started the rollercoaster ride that investors were forced to endure for much of the rest of the year.

Having hit an all-time high of 6,183.7 on July 20, the FTSE 100 had plunged to 4,599.2, its lowest level of the year, by October 8. It closed on Wednesday, at 5,882.6, a rise on the year of 747.1, or 14.5 per cent.

The outlook for 1999 remains uncertain. There is no shortage of money finding its way into the market, interest rates are falling and the high levels of corporate activity show no signs of abating. Against that must be set the slowdown in the UK economy, the slump in the Far East and continuing market volatility.

Another successful sector in 1998 was information technology. No less than six IT companies featured in the top 20 best performers of fully listed shares. The sector would have been even more impressive had it not been for a wobble during the final quarter as investors began to worry about the impact of recession on earnings growth.

Many IT companies are closely linked to the investment banking sector, which has undergone heavy rationalisation in recent months. This makes the likelihood of increased expenditure on new computer systems and the updating of old ones less likely.

The best performance came from RM with a leap of 304p to 463½p, or 190 per cent. Similar performances were seen in Sherwood International, up from 530p to £13.55 (155 per cent), London Bridge Software, 508½p to £12.87½ (153 per cent). Logica, 231½p to 522½p (125 per cent), Kewill Systems, 570p to £12.75 (123 per cent) and FI Group, up from 155½p to 328½p (111 per cent).

But not all companies struck the right chord with investors during 1998. The expected revival for retailers failed to materialise. Instead, they had to face up to tougher trading conditions with profit warnings sprinkled liberally throughout the year. One of the worst performers was House of Fraser, down from 200½p to 52p, or 74 per cent. At the other end of the high street, JJB Sports plunged 64 per cent from 649p to 231½p as the craze for replica football shirts came apart at the seams amid falling prices and increased competition.

The big ticket retailers, such as the carpet and furniture stores, were also hit. They saw their shares collapse in the wake of a plethora of profit warnings. A case in point was Harveys Furnishings, which saw its price fall 170p to 101½p (63 per cent) on the back of several profit warnings. Other retailers to feel the pinch included MFI Furniture, 120p to 34½p (71 per cent), and the supermarket chain Alldays, down 342p (66 per cent) to 171½p.

Booker found itself left on the shelf after a difficult year that saw it jilted not once, but twice. First, it was in bid talks with Somerfield. But the talks faltered and it later became clear that Somerfield had taken a look at the company and did not like what it found.

A profits warning was followed by talks with Budgens, another supermarket chain. But once again the talks came to nothing and were followed by another profits warning.

This was all very bad news for Stuart Rose, the man brought in to revive Booker's fortunes. He bought a large chunk of shares before being forced to issue the profit warnings. They finished the year 255½p (80 per cent) lower at 62p.

The fall from grace of Albert Fisher, another food distributor, has been as swift as it has been dramatic. The shares started the year at 36½p and closed on Wednesday at 5½p, a fall of 86 per cent. Boardroom upheavals combined with a series of profit warnings to drive the shares lower.

Biocompatibles was another significant casualty in 1998 after the quality of its blood vessel supports, or stents, to be supplied to Johnson & Johnson was called into question. The shares started the year at 492½p and finished it at 86p, a loss of 82 per cent.

The inexorable rise of Regent Inns since its flotation in 1993 came to a shuddering halt in June as it served up a profits warning laced with accounting errors. Its shares crashed 140p that day to 176½p and any chance of a recovery has been scuppered by the dire summer weather and the gloomy outlook for consumer spending. Its shares ended the year 69 per cent lower at 101½p.

Powerscreen provided a classic example of how ruthless the City can be at the merest hint of scandal. It provided one of the most dramatic falls seen in the stock market last year in the wake of the discovery of accounting irregularities. Having started the year at 607½p, it ended at 114p, a loss of 493p, or 81 per cent.

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France Fr	9.81	9.03
Germany Dm	2.948	2.706
Greece Dr	493	454
Hong Kong $	13.67	12.47
Iceland	127	107
Indonesia	16504	11504
Ireland Pt	1.1737	1.0847
Israel Shk	7.25	6.59
Italy Lira	2931	2694
Japan Yen	203.64	186.11
Malta	0.661	0.602
Netherlds Gld	3.329	3.034
New Zealand $	3.27	3.03
Norway Kr	13.23	12.29
Portugal Esc	297.68	275.65
S Africa Rd	10.39	9.43
Spain Pta	248.16	229.37
Sweden Kr	14.24	13.14
Switzerland Fr	2.444	2.226
Turkey Lira	538806	502806
USA $	1.765	1.622

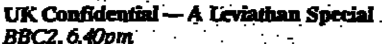
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TELEVISION CHOICE

Fifty years of favourites

Are You Sitting Comfortably?
BBC1, 4.05pm

That lovely little trail for BBC children's programmes (it even had its own title — *Future Generations*) may have given you — never mind the smaller members of your family — a taste for this omnibus of clips from *Muffin the Mule* on through the decades to *Teletubbies*: 50 years of programming for children so you're bound to find something you remember, whatever your age. *Bagpuss? Pogles Wood?* How about *Multi-Coloured Swap Shop?* Viewers have been voting for their favourites by phone, letter and e-mail and today we'll hear which programme is their overall poll-winner. Meanwhile, celebrities have their say . . . for Gary Lineker you can't beat *Blue Peter*. *The Clangers* are at the centre of Patrick Moore's universe and Angela Rippon is nostalgic for *The Magic Roundabout* . . .



UK Confidential — A Leviathan Special
BBC2, 6.40pm

For the first time television has been given advance sight of the secret documents closed until January 1 of each year under the 30 year rule. So, though we haven't yet got what the Americans pride themselves on — a Freedom of Information Act — we can now see the true picture of events in 1968 as kept under wraps by the Public Record Office. Says presenter Mark Urban: "I think viewers will be surprised by how directly our 1968 films relate to 1998 headlines." Included are Brian Walden's report on Prime Minister Harold Wilson's "inside stories" and a look at the declassification process within the Foreign Office. Other contributors are James Callaghan, Roy Jenkins, Barbara Castle, Dennis Healey and other key ministers from 1968. We're told that what is released today amounts to "a mile and a half" of printed material — *Leviathan* has been working over several months to mine the nuggets.

My Favourite Frasier
Channel 4, 9.00pm

Kelsey Grammer has played the Seattle radio shrink Dr Frasier Crane for 14 years (introducing the character on *Cheers*) and this evening sees a celebration of the kind only television can do for its own. We start with high profile stars from both sides of the Atlantic picking their favourite episodes, plus the choices of writers, producers, cast members, even the odd psychiatrist. Kelsey's own favourite (9.30pm) is the wonderful *Our Father Whose Art Ain't in Heaven* — then there's a documentary on the making of the show (10pm) and the chance for viewers to vote for their favourite episode (10.40pm). After all this tub-thumping the evening ends in *Cheers* (11.10pm) with more classic one-liners from the good doctor, then a regular at that much-missed pub.

Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer star in a new comedy series (BBC2, 10.15pm)

Bang, Bang, It's Reeves and Mortimer
BBC2, 10.15pm

Thank goodness. Not that one has anything against *Shooting Stars*, but it did tend to tie our hyperactive heroes to a desk and a (sort of) quiz format. Now, with one bound, they are free again to do what they do best. After a three-year absence from their mould-breaking sketch show Vic and Bob return with some old faces . . . folk singers Mulligan and O'Hare, Tom Fun and the Stotts are just some of them. But there's plenty that's new . . . Mr Hex the Road Safety Woodpecker will be a permanent fixture and a docusoap called *The Club* with Vic as owner, bouncer and compere Kinky John is not to be missed. The supporting cast includes Charlie Higson and Morwenna Banks. **Elizabeth Cowley**

RADIO CHOICE

Small Worlds
BBC World Service, 3.15pm

Cleo Paskal's six-part documentary is about what the world's smaller nations are doing to avoid the man-made environmental disasters that threaten the survival of their bigger brothers. I can't speak about the remaining instalments but I can tell you that episode one is popular sociology with a recognisably human face. The going can, however, sometimes get tough. The Maldives protect their vital tuna supplies by machine gunning the funnels of marauding Japanese vessels and then humiliating the captains and officers by making them parade through the streets. Litter-loutish tourists visiting the Seychelles had better watch out. There are plans afoot to make them take their rubbish back with them when they fly home.

Lullaby for an Insomniac Princess
Radio 4, 3.45pm

On radio there are some first-class readers of stories — and then there is Juliet Stevenson. She is in a class of her own. The same is true of Juliet Stevenson on stage, screen and on television. I remember, back in the 1980s, being asked by *The Times* to nominate my actress of the year. It took me all of three seconds to declare her name. I rejoice then that the first woman's voice to be heard reading a non-serialised story on Radio 4 on this, the first day of the new year is hers. And she has been given a story worthy of her. Marina Warner's *Lullaby for an Insomniac Princess* is about an unfortunate soul who, to quote *Macbeth*, is denied the "innocent sleep, sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleave of care". **Peter Davalle**

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.00am Gilles Peterson **8.00** Emma B **11.00** Chris Moyles **3.00pm** Scott Mills **6.00** Essential Selection **9.00** Hip Hop Anthems **2.00am** Fabio and Grooverider **4.00** Emma B

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Mo Dutta **8.05** Sarah Kennedy **10.00** Richard Allinson **12.30pm** The Hucklines Songbook **1.00** Eric Clapton: Bluesbreaker **2.00** Alex Lester **5.00** Des Lynam **7.00** Neil Diamond in Conversation **8.00** Ainsley Harriott's New Year Feast **9.30** Listen to the Band: A Review of 1998 **10.00** Radio 2 Young Musician 1998 Showcase **11.00** Lynn Parsons

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

6.00am Procops's Hoops (r) **6.30** Breakfast **9.00** Brian Hayes **12.00** The Midday News **1.00pm** Ruscoe and Co **3.00** The Scottish Premier League, Motherwell v Kilmarnock **5.00** Drive with Jonathan Legard and Lynn Bowles **7.00** News Extra with Eric Dixon **7.30** Alan Green's Sportsnight **9.00** Park Life. Mark O'Donnell finds out how Ron Noades runs Brentford Football Club **10.00** Late Night Live **1.00am** Up All Night. Richard Dallyn presents worldwide news coverage. Plus, updates from the first day of the fifth Test between Australia and England in Sydney **4.00** Extra Time (r)

VIRGIN

6.00am Richard Allen **10.00** Russ Williams **2.00pm** Nick Abbot **6.00** Wheels of Steel **10.00** Mark Forrest **2.00am** Paul Coyte

TALK RADIO

6.00am Russell Grant's New Year Breakfast **9.00** Kate Lloyd **12.00** An Audience with Barry Manilow **1.00pm** The Sports Zone **8.00** An Audience with Tony Bennett (r) **9.00** Mike Allen **2.00am** Mike Dickin

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am The World Today **7.00** News **7.15** Off the Shelf Colombia **7.30** Music Review **8.00** News **8.10** Pause for Thought **8.15** Westway **8.30** John Peel **9.00** News; (648 only) News in German **9.05** World Business Report Special **9.15** Early Versions **9.30** Speaking of English **9.45** Sports Round-Up **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Assignment **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Focus on Faith **12.00** News **12.05pm** World Business Report Special **12.15** Britain Today **12.30** Wild Tales **12.45** Sports Round-Up **1.00** Newshour **2.00** News **2.05** Outlook **2.30** Multitrack: Alternative **3.00** News; (648 only) News in German **3.05** Football Extra **3.15** Small Worlds. See Choice **3.30** Science in Action **4.00** News **4.15** On Your Behalf **4.30** Insight; (648 only) News in German **4.45** Britain Today **5.00** Omnibus **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Sports Round-Up **6.00** Newsdesk **6.30** Focus On Faith; (648 only) News in German **7.00** News Summary **7.01** Outlook **7.25** Pause For Thought **7.30** Multitrack Alternative **8.00** Newshour **9.00** News **9.05** World Business Report Special **9.15** Britain Today **9.30** People and Politics **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Insight **10.45** Sports Round-Up **11.00** News **11.05** Outlook **11.30** Multitrack Alternative **12.00** Newsdesk **12.30pm** From the Weeklies **12.45** Britain Today **1.00** Newsdesk **1.30** Small Worlds **1.45** Short Story **2.00** Newsday **2.30** People and Politics **3.00** News **3.05** World Business Report Special **3.15** Sport **3.30** Science in Action **4.00** Newsdesk **4.30** Weekend

CLASSIC FM

6.00am The Smooth Classics Hangover Cure. Sally Peterson presents relaxing music for New Year's day **8.00** Easier Breakfast. With Nick Bailey **10.00** Dr Mark Porter's New Year Work Out. Music and resolutions to start the year **12.00** Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones introduces the most requested pieces of music **2.00pm** Celebrity Recitals **5.00** Michael Mappin: Music, news and weather **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. John Brunning kicks off 1999 with two hours of easy listening **9.00** Evening Concert. Janacek (Sinfonietta); Shostakovich (Piano Concerto No 2 in F); Copland (Symphony No 3); Ravel (Bolero) **11.00** Mann at Night **2.00am** Celebrity Recitals (r)

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air with Stephanie Hughes
9.00 Masterworks with Peter Hobday. Includes Chopin (Fantasy-Impromptu in C sharp minor, Op 66)
10.15 The New Year's Day Concert Live from the Golden Hall of Vienna's Musikverein. Brian Kay introduces the Vienna Philharmonic's traditional New Year concert of music by the Strauss family. This year's guest conductor is Lorin Maazel **10.50** Naked Beauties. The first of two programmes in which Andrew Jefford examines handmade cigars **11.15** Concert, part two
12.35pm Telemann (Sonata in A minor for recorder, violin and continuo, Essercizii Musici). Performed by the Palladian Ensemble
12.50 The Harmonic Series with Adrian Jack
1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert The Cardinall's Musick performs English choral music written for the 16th-century dukes of Arundel
2.00 The BBC Orchestras Ulster Orchestra under Vernon Handley and Nicholas Braithwaite, David Wilson-Johnson, baritone
3.50 The Harmonic Series
4.00 Mozart Voices Michael Oliver talks to Thomas Allen. Last in series
4.45 Music to Die For Jeanette Winterson discusses Strauss's Act 3 Trio from *Der Rosenkavalier* (8/8)
5.00 A Medieval Christmas Seasonal music
5.30 Music Rooms Has Natalie Wheen lost her marbles in Stoke Newington?
6.00 Discovering Music with Leonard Slatkin Slatkin is joined by the BBC Philharmonic to perform Bolcom (Symphony No 6) (10/10)
7.00 Cabaret Cocktails (4/4)
7.30 Performance on 3 Prom 35, given on August 14. Ruth Ziesak, soprano, Jadwiga Rappe, mezzo, Philip Langridge, tenor, Willard White, bass, City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus and Orchestra under Simon Rattle. Birtwistle (The Triumph of Time); Beethoven (Symphony No 9 in D) (r)
9.20 Postscript: The Shakespeare Trade — Global Shakespeare (5/5)
9.40 Yevgeni Kissin Another chance to hear the Russian pianist Yevgeni Kissin's first solo recital at the 1997 BBC Proms (r)
11.20 The Harmonic Series
11.30 And His Mother Called Him Bill (3/3) (r)
12.00 Composer of the Week: Bizet (r)
1.00am Through the Night with Donald Macleod. **1.00** Baroque church music for Christmas from the new world **2.10** Sibelius (Masonic Ritual Music) **3.10** Granados (Spanish Dances, Op 37) **4.05** Haydn (Symphony No 11 in E flat)

RADIO 4

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast
5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day
5.47 Farming Today with Steve Peacock
6.00 Today introduced by Sue MacGregor and Winifred Robinson
9.00 Desert Island Discs Bob Monkhouse looks back on a lifetime's achievements (r)
9.45 (FM) Serial: Peter Pan and Wendy The final part of the classic children's tale, by J.M. Barrie
9.45 (LW) An Act of Worship
10.00 Woman's Hour with Jenni Murray
11.00 Summer Pastures Dylan Winter rides with cowboys of the Pitchfork Ranch, Wyoming, whose way of life is threatened by big-game hunters
11.30 The Oldest Member: The Awakening of Rollo Podmarsh New series. Maurice Denham stars as the golf club veteran in P.G. Wodehouse's stories
12.00 (FM) News 12.04 You and Yours John Waite tackles more consumer concerns
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
1.00 The World at One Presented by Guto Harri
1.30 Screen Test Brian Sibley chairs the second semi-final of the film quiz, from the Cornerhouse Cinema, Manchester
2.00 The Archers (r)
2.15 Afternoon Play: Open Secrets — Vandals The last of five Canadian short stories by Alice Munro. Liza's return to a childhood haunt rekindles long-buried memories. With Buffy Davis, Rhonda Millar and Adam Sims
3.00 Making History Roger Wilkes helps listeners research their own historical mysteries
3.30 Radio: Ten Poems About Sound Sean Street talks to Charlotte Green and reads his sequence of poems inspired by Radio 4
3.45 Lullaby for an Insomniac Princess Marina Warner's story about a princess unable to sleep. Read by Juliet Stevenson. See Choice
4.00 Open Book Humphrey Carpenter explores the pitfalls of rereading old favourites (r)
4.30 The Message Alex Brodie and his guests discuss current media trends
5.00 PM with Branwen Jeffreys and Nigel Wrench
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 News Quiz of the Year Satirical review of the second half of 1998, with Jeremy Hardy, Simon Hoggart and the *Times* columnist Alan Coren
7.00 The Archers 7.15 Front Row The Nobel Prize-winning poet Seamus Heaney reads from his collected works and talks to Mark Lawson
7.45 Under One Roof by Michele Hanson (r)
8.00 Our Next Question Please? Jonathan Dimbleby looks back on a year of *Any Questions?*
8.45 Letter from America by Alistair Cooke
9.00 The Friday Play: Where Three Roads Meet Don Taylor's story about a vicar's crisis of faith. Starring Michael N. Harbour, Karen Archer, Peter Jeffrey, Frances Jeater and Robin Sebastian (r)
10.00 The World Tonight Special with Sue Cameron
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Five Dahls Patricia Routledge reads *The Way Up to Heaven*, about a warring couple who reach breaking point. The last of five tales by Roald Dahl
11.00 Late Night on 4: Late Tackle Sporting conversation
11.30 Sporting Philanthropists New series investigating the motives of big-hearted British businessmen, beginning with Eddie Kulukundis, unsung hero of the athletics world (1/3)
12.00 (FM) News 12.30 (FM) The Late Book: The Restraint of Beasts Gavin Muir reads part five of Magnus Mills's story
12.00 (LW) Test Match Special Australia v England. Coverage from Sydney of the first day's play in the fifth Test
12.48 (FM) Shipping 1.00 (FM) As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 693, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1089. Television and radio listings compiled by Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

هكذا من الأصل



In truth, Stanley's laurels were well earned

REVIEW



Paul Hoggart

Stanley Baxter retired from television in 1996. ITV offered us the next best thing to a new Christmas special in **Stanley Baxter In Person**, a rare interview with the very private comedian, and a one-hour clip-fest of his greatest moments.

Baxter belongs to that elite thespian fraternity whose nostrils are so expressively wide and flared that they hardly need to act. Think of the sinister exposed septum of Lee Van Cleef in the spaghetti westerns, or Kenneth Williams using his vast frontal cavities as in-your-face camp accessories. Baxter himself sports a pair of car-port size beauties, and yet, as in all aspects of his performances, he has used them sparingly and with precision.

He remained carefully private, and we learnt precious little about him, although he did provide a tantalising sketch of his mother's aspirations, and a wonderful image of himself as a boy, wide-eyed at the cinema, munching marmalade and banana sandwiches out of his satchel. His marriage was referred to with respectful minimalism and there was no attempt to probe the psychology of his unsettlingly brilliant impersonations of female stars.

His own quiet pride in his achievements was mirrored by the quiet, but completely sincere, appreciation of the celebrity contributors. Billy Connolly, Robbie Coltrane, Stephen Fry, Lulu and Rory Bremner were all affectionately reverent, as if discussing the influence on their childhood of a much-loved uncle who had sadly passed on and could not be persuaded, despite their best efforts, to return from the dead.

Fry's admiration for Baxter's performances was actually making him crosser and crosser with the state of television today. "They wouldn't do it now. They just patronise the hell out of the audience," he fumed, adding later that his shows were "the last time when television could actually contain intelligence and wit and broad humour and delight and pleasure, all in the same basket".

It may well be true that such lavish sets and high production values are a thing of the past, and there is certainly more and more deeply patronising garbage passed off as light entertainment these days, but talented performers still get their slots, mercifully. The reason there is nobody like Stanley Baxter on television is that there is nobody like Stanley Baxter.

The programme started 15 minutes before Rory Bremner's own New Year Special, **The Greatest Rory Ever Told**, on Channel 4. We saw Bremner present Baxter's Lifetime Achievement Award at the Baftas and, like his hero's, his impersonations are often uncannily accurate. He is versatile and his material is unusually intelligent. You might think this would give the lie to Fry's jeremiad, but it doesn't, for the simple reason that it often isn't all that funny, raising crinkly smiles rather than joyous guffaws.

Bremner definitely suffered from the comparison. If he wasn't so rich, talented and successful, you might almost feel sorry for him. At least Baxter didn't mean it, unlike the assorted Euro-dross on **Naked Eurovision** (BBC1), a look behind the scenes at last summer's Eurovision Song Contest in Birmingham. This was perfect documentary soap material and would doubtless be signed up already if they didn't have to wait a year between filming opportunities.

Still, we had a camp star, in the Israeli transsexual winner Dana International (why is she named after an airport?). The resident nutter was Yannis, a disgruntled Greek composer: boorish, disruptive, straggly bearded and with a chip on his shoulder the size of the Elgin Marbles. But they were a sad lot and would have been much more entertaining played by Stanley Baxter.

It is a tribute to Stella Gibbons that any yarn in which a sophisticated, but basically innocent, town child arrives to stay with morose, yet disturbing country relatives, is compared to *Cold Comfort Farm*. Of course Gibbons's spoof only worked because she was parodying a genre which already had an ancient pedigree. **The Orchard Walls**, the second of **The Ruth Rendell Mysteries** (ITV), was so firmly planted in this soil that even though the creaking door and leering loony factor was applied with a light touch, it nevertheless all felt pretty formulaic.

A variant of the theme is the *The Go-Between* scenario, in which the visitors find themselves unwittingly caught up in the dangerous, secret passions of the household. This story had that too as wartime evacuee Jenny (Honeysuckle Weeks) discovers the secret passion between the daughter-in-law of the house and a dashing cad of a fighter pilot.

As the story is set in 1942, Jenny is a wide-eyed 16-going-on-12. Honeysuckle Weeks (cutesy name, cutesy gal!), on the other hand, is actually 19-going-on-24. This made her flirtation with the bounder from the Spitfire seem a lot more than the fantasies of an adolescent girl, and the attentions of the horny-handed farm labourer rather less predatory than was perhaps intended. But she caught the air of awakening sensuality and baffled anxiety well enough.

The production was well-crafted, competently acted and good-looking. There were even some vaguely intriguing psychological undertones and the odd sinister *frisson*. It just felt like going through the motions — yet another murder mystery in yet another house in the country with yet more tangled relationships. Shortly after the last main character had been introduced, I realised I couldn't care less what happened to any of them. Now if Stanley Baxter had taken all the roles . . .

BBC1

6.30am Children's BBC: Teletubbies (7890307) **6.55** Postman Pat (2909710) **7.10** Arthur (2320975) **7.35** Brambly Hedge (3216197) **8.00** Yogi's Treasure Hunt (5028804) **8.20** Blue Peter: Magic Moments (3485541) **8.50** Taz-Mania (7708642) **9.15** 911 Live in Malaysia (6860062)

9.40 The Fame Game: New Year Special (2/2) (T) (5246130) **10.05** Teletubbies (1543536) **10.35** Rotten Ralph (5275555)

11.00 The Little Rascals (1994) Premiere. A gang of mischievous children set out to sabotage their friend's blossoming romance, and prepare for an important go-kart race. Children's comedy, with appearances by Mel Brooks, Whoopi Goldberg and Daryl Hannah. Directed by Penelope Spheeris (T) (8795555)

12.20pm Wipeout (T) (4836555)

12.45 Laughing for Ages (6/6) (T) (298975)

1.15 News; Regional News; Weather (T) (94989739)

1.25 Neighbours Hannah and Paul are strapped for cash (T) (60685623)

1.50 Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (1968) Classic musical children's adventure about an eccentric inventor who rescues an old car from the scrap heap and gives it magical powers. Dick Van Dyke and Lionel Jeffries star. Directed by Ken Hughes (T) (29987536)

4.05 CHOICE **Are You Sitting Comfortably?** A look back at some of the nation's favourite children's programmes (T) (2626888)

4.45 Neighbours Hannah and Paul are strapped for cash (r) (T) (1022517)

5.10 News; Regional News; Weather (T) (5883826)

5.25 K-9 (1989) An obsessive cop finds himself partnered with a lovable Alsatian who soon gives him a run for his money. *Fast-moving comedy, starring James* Belushi, Mel Harris, Ed O'Neill and Kevin Tighe. Directed by Rod Daniel (T) (95719284)

7.00 The World's Strongest Man The final from Morocco (T) (9997)

8.00 Apollo 13 (1995) Premiere. Oscar-*winning, fact-based drama, starring* Tom Hanks as Jim Lovell, the leader of the ill-fated 1970 Apollo 13 moonshot. The mission is plagued by a series of mechanical problems which cause the spacecraft to abandon its landing and put the lives of the crew in danger. With *Kevin Bacon, Bill Paxton, Ed Harris* and Gary Sinise. Directed by Ron Howard (T) (24087975)

10.15 News; Regional News; Weather (T) (797994)

10.35 Airplane II: The Sequel (1982) The madcap team return to wreak havoc on board a space shuttle. Disaster spoof, starring Robert Hays, Julie Hagerty and William Shatner. Directed by Ken Finkleman (T) (1251791)

11.55 Fletch Lives (1989) Comedy sequel, starring Chevy Chase as a reporter and master of disguise who inherits a *mansion and gets entangled in a murder* mystery. Directed by Michael Ritchie (T) (251265)

1.25am Weather (4278444)

1.30 BBC News 24 (1815802)

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BBC2

6.00am FILM: A King in New York (1957) Satirical Charlie Chaplin comedy (T) (48931284) **7.45 FILM: Days of Thrills and Laughter** (216791) **9.15** Perfectly Frank (7611739) **9.20 FILM: Knights of the Round Table** (28712265) **11.10** Happy New Year (7935062) **11.15** New Year's Day Concert from Vienna (5779623) **12.35pm** The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures: Staying Alive — The Body in Balance (5547604)

1.35 Cambridge Folk Festival Includes performances by Eddi Reader, the Levellers and Eliza Carthy (4158642)

2.15 The Shealtiels Tracing a family history across the globe (T) (410265)

3.50 The Robe (1953) Religious epic, starring Richard Burton as a Roman centurion assigned to oversee Christ's crucifixion. Directed by Henry Koster (T) (28185081)

6.00 Poppea After Poppea makes it more than clear she's out of Ottone's reach, he turns his attentions elsewhere (947178)

6.40 CHOICE **UK Confidential: A Leviathan Special** One-off special examining the truth behind major political events of 1968 (628791)

7.20 Rex the Runt The playmates come under the powerful influence of TV evangelist Johnny Saveby (r) (T) (800826)

7.30 University Challenge The tabloids take on the broadsheets in a press special. Chaired by Jeremy Paxman (T) (5)

8.00 Gardening from Scratch Two Helen Yemm inspires amateur enthusiasts (r) (T) (5888)

8.30 Gardeners' World Alan Titchmarsh looks back on highlights of the 1998 series (T) (7623)

9.00 The New Year Armistice Satirical hilarity with Armando Iannucci and the team (2/2) (T) (533975)

9.35 Rex the Runt Rex accidentally turns *himself into spaghetti* (T) (281623)

9.45 The Young Ones The students learn their house is to be demolished. Comedy, starring Rik Mayall, Christopher Ryan, Ade Edmondson and Nigel Planer (r) (T) (196178)

10.15 CHOICE **Bang Bang, It's Reeves and Mortimer** New series. Vic and Bob return to the sketch show format (T) (188159)

10.45 Young Guns Go for It! New series examining the sounds of the 1980s (T) (818739)

11.25 The Boy George Video Diary Culture Club's sell-out tour (T) (172604)



Gary Larson's long-running cartoon strip comes to television (11.45pm)

11.45 Tales from the Far Side 2 Includes A karate-kicking deer which terrifies hunters (659333)

12.35am Sliders Zombies menace the team (T) (7136821)

1.20 Sliders Wade becomes fascinated by a vampire rock band (T) (5540192)

2.05 Weather (9927463) **2.10** Close

HTV

5.55am ITN Morning News (7248401)

6.00 GMTV (6193826)

9.25 CITV: Percy the Park Keeper (6875994) **9.55** Rocky and the Dodos (8652284) **10.10** Brilliant Creatures (6665449)

10.30 The Canterville Ghost Adaptation of Oscar Wilde's tale. Ian Richardson, Celia Imrie, Sarah-Jane Potts and James D'Arcy star (r) (T) (27536)

12.00 Are You Afraid of the Dark? (T) (78130)

12.30pm ITN News; Weather (T) (17987710)

12.40 Shortland Street Lulu gets a new friend (3843517)

1.10 Sean Connery Close Up (T) (5868352)

1.55 Once Upon a Forest (1993) Animated *adventure about a group of animals* fighting to save their enchanted woodland home. Directed by Charles Grosvenor (T) (7108265)

3.15 Far from the Madding Crowd Bathsheba weds Sergeant Troy after a whirlwind romance, but her happiness is *cut short (2/2) (r) (T) (344333)*

5.15 ITN News; Weather (T) (5886913)

5.25 Black Beauty (1994) Premiere. Lavish adaptation of Anna Sewell's classic story. With David Thewlis, Jim Carter, Eleanor Bron and Sean Bean. Directed by Caroline Thompson (T) (95704352)

7.00 Do-It-Yourself, Mr Bean The hapless bachelor tries his hand at DIY. Rowan Atkinson stars (r) (T) (6994)

7.30 Coronation Street Sally's life hangs in the balance (T) (81)

8.00 Who Wants to Be A Millionaire? New series. Chris Tarrant hosts the ultimate big-prize game show (T) *(5642)*



Sean Connery enjoys his fifth outing as James Bond, 007 (8.30pm)

8.30 You Only Live Twice (1967) James Bond fakes his own death to fool enemy agents that he is no longer a threat — *then gets sent on a mission to Japan,* where his old adversary Blofeld has entered the space race as part of a bid for world domination. With Sean Connery, Donald Pleasence, Bernard Lee, Lois Maxwell and Desmond Llewellyn. Directed by Lewis Gilbert (T) (99454772)

10.35 ITN News; Weather (T) (825159)

10.44 HTV Weather (192333)

10.45 Alien (1979) A cargo spacecraft inadvertently picks up a malevolent life-form which proceeds to slaughter the crew members. Sci-fi chiller, starring Sigourney Weaver. Directed by Ridley Scott (T) (66338401)

12.55am Greatest Goals World Cup highlights from 1966-86 (8321598)

2.05 Club@vision Dance music (7483531)

2.50 Stormy Weathers (1992) Comedy adventure about a female private eye who stumbles on an underhand plot involving the Government. Cybill Shepherd stars. Directed by Will Mackenzie (329024)

4.25 Entertainment Now (r) (7729442)

5.25 Coronation Street (r) (T) (1118173)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:

12.40-1.10pm Dinosaurs (3843517)

5.20 The Making of Dr Dolittle (5470540)

5.40-6.55 Cartoon Time (5027482)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except:

12.40-1.10pm Emmerdale (3843517)

[illegible]

As HTV West except:

12.40-1.10pm Emmerdale (3843517)

5.25-5.55 Bugs Bunny (1118173)

[illegible]

As HTV West except:

12.40-1.10pm Dinosaurs (3843517)

[illegible]

Starts: **6.00am Sesame Street** (r) (21162791) **7.00 For Better, For Worse** (r) (47395642) **7.30 The Magic School Bus** (r) (47381449) **8.00 The Big Breakfast** (35002826) **10.00 The Bigger Breakfast;** Saved by the Bell (35005913) **10.30 Eerie, Indiana** (T) (16981284) **11.00 Madison** (24249352) **11.30 Babylon 5** (T) (27907739) **12.25pm Granpa** (T) (67044997) **12.55 Planed Plant** (T) (69641438) **1.25 Racing from Cheltenham** *Alastair Down introduces the day's racing* action, comprising the **1.35** Steel Plate Trial Juvenile Novices' Hurdle, **2.10** Tote Handicap Hurdle, **2.45** Marchpole Handicap Chase and the **3.20** Sporting Index Select Chase (Cross Country Chase). Commentary by John Francome, Graham Goode, Simon Holt and *John Oaksey (64248975)* ***3.40 Fifteen-to-One: Grand Final*** (T) (60146178) **4.30 Planed Plant** (23100994) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (56653888) **6.00 Newyddion 6** (T) (64241642) **6.05 Heno** (T) (13198807) **7.00 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (25965333) **7.25 Cyngerdd Caneuon Tony Ac Aloma** Highlights of the extravaganza from North Wales Theatre, Llandudno, where some of Wales's top entertainers paid tribute to the classic songs of Tony and Aloma. Hosted by Aled Jones (10296772) **8.15 Cefn Gwlad** Dai Jones visits brothers Hubert and Tommy Roberts from Fferm y Gop, Trelawnyd in Flintshire (T) (11951265) **8.45 Newyddion** (T) (36810130) **9.00 My Favourite Frasier** See Choice (24236888) **9.30 Frasier's Favourite Frasier** (r) (T) (38954246) **10.00 Brookside** Jacqui, Susannah and Lindsey look to the future as the *Millennium Club finally opens its doors.* Romance beckons for Mike and Rachel, while Ryan goes on the warpath and Niamh has a sombre start to 1999 (T) (54421178) **10.35 My Favourite Frasier: The Frasier Story** (42170642) **11.15 Frasier** (11960913) **11.45 Cheers** (T) (20926913) **12.20am FILM: The Man with Two Brains** (1983) Brilliant surgeon Steve Martin escapes his ailing marriage by falling in love again — this time with a human brain (voiced by Sissy Spacek). Everything goes *swimmingly until his attempts to find a "home"* for his new partner cause confusion and calamity. Farcical comedy, also starring Kathleen Turner, David Warner and Paul *Benedict (T) (37523647)* ***1.55 FILM: All of Me*** (1984) Half of a successful lawyer's body becomes possessed by the spirit of a headstrong dead woman in the wake of a disastrous supernatural experiment. Comedy, starring Steve Martin, Lily Tomlin and Victoria Tennant (T) (47607685) **3.35 FILM: The Man Who Changed His Mind** (1936) Vintage thriller, starring Boris Karloff as a mad scientist convinced he can transplant the mind of one person into another. With Anna Lee and John *Loder* (32048735) **4.50 Diwedd**

CHANNEL 4

5.50am Old Mother Hubbard (7247772)

5.55 Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp (7279371)

6.00 Sesame Street (69604)

7.00 For Better, For Worse (r) (25197)

7.30 The Magic School Bus (r) (62684)

8.00 The Big Breakfast (77062)

10.00 The Bigger Breakfast; Saved by the Bell (87449)

10.30 Eerie, Indiana (r) (T) (85420)

11.00 Madison (T) (7081)

11.30 Babylon 5 (T) (7577130)

12.25pm Explosive Dance (1076517)

1.25 Racing from Cheltenham The **1.35** Steel Plate Trial Juvenile Novices' Hurdle, **2.10** Tote Handicap Hurdle, **2.45** Marchpole Handicap Chase and the **3.20** Sporting Index Select Chase (Cross Country Chase) (70567062)

3.50 Fifteen-to-One: Grand Final (r) (T) (2995975)

4.30 Countdown (T) (1010772)

4.55 Ricki Lake (T) (4121130)

5.30 Frank Sinatra in Japan In concert in Japan (r) (T) (1015062)

6.50 News Summary (T) (814994)

6.55 On the Buses (1971) Feature-length version of the vintage sitcom in which Reg Varney reprises his role as put-upon driver Stan Butler. Directed by Harry Brooks (T) (42766246)

8.30 Brookside The Millennium Club finally *opens its doors (T) (2791)*



Kelsey Grammer stars in an evening devoted to *Frasier* (9pm)

9.00 CHOICE **My Favourite Frasier** Celebrities and the cast of Frasier choose a classic episode of the award-winning comedy (T) (4517)

9.30 Frasier's Favourite Frasier Martin buys Frasier an expensive work of art to repay his hospitality — but unfortunately the gesture is not appreciated *(r) (T) (14420)*

10.00 The Frasier Story The early days of the hit show (T) (745159)

10.40 Frasier Viewers' favourite episode (T) (879739)

11.10 Cheers The guys go on a fishing trip (T) (776449)

11.45 The Man with Two Brains (1983) Brilliant surgeon Steve Martin escapes his ailing marriage by falling in love with a human brain (voiced by Sissy Spacek). Comedy also starring Kathleen Turner. Directed by Carl Reiner (T) (988888)

1.20am All of Me (1984) Half of a lawyer's *body becomes possessed by the spirit of* a headstrong dead woman. Comedy, with Steve Martin and Lily Tomlin. Directed by Carl Reiner (T) (779753)

3.00 The Man Who Changed His Mind (1936) Thriller, starring Boris Karloff as a mad scientist. Directed by Robert Stevenson (9690956)

4.15 Dr Bull (1933) A country doctor contends with small-minded squabbles as he fights illness in the community. Directed by John Ford (7759662)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am The Wind in the Willows (r) (24035933)

6.20 Roobarb (r) (50926587)

6.30 Dappledown Farm (r) (7039623)

7.00 Wimzie's House (r) (9394284)

7.30 Milkshake! (4558307)

7.35 Havakazoo (r) (9025197)

8.00 George of the Jungle (r) (1465688)

8.30 Lassie: The New Beginning (TVM 1978) Canine adventure, starring John Reilly. Directed by Don Chaffey (56131265)

10.05 My Story (3425555)

10.20 Sunset Beach (T) (2415081)

11.10 Leeza (r) (2302807)

12.00 5 News at Noon (T) (1468975)

12.30pm Family Affairs Liam leaves town. (r) (T) 5 News Update (9234604)

1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful Maggie goes on the warpath (T) (9393555)

1.30 Wowfabgroovy (9233975)

2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (6654975)

2.30 Football Review of the Year: Part One Highlights from the Carlsberg Trophy, Uefa Cup, Cup Winners' Cup and Euro *2000 qualifiers (9359284)*

6.00 100 Per Cent Quiz (5515284)

6.30 Family Affairs Annie drops a bombshell, (T) 5 News Update (1197710)



Comedy with Bill Murray, Harold Ramis and Dan Aykroyd (7.05pm)

7.05 Ghostbusters (1984) Eccentric scientists Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis try to prevent the destruction of New York. Blockbusting supernatural comedy, also starring Sigourney Weaver and Rick Moranis. Directed by Ivan Reitman (T); 5 News Update (95095468)

9.00 Duggan — Death in Paradise (1997) A detective finds his hopes of a peaceful holiday shattered when he is drafted in to a local investigation into the killing of a *young woman. Murder mystery, starring* John Bach and Fiona Mogridge. Directed by Yvonne Mackay (T) (12605772)

10.50 Melinda's Big Night In With guests Anthea Turner and 911 (6307505)

11.35 Compromising Situations A hospital patient receives saucy gifts (r) (5680371)

12.10am Russ Meyer's Finders Keepers, Lovers Weepers (1968) A robbery at a go-go bar goes badly awry and all the crooks involved get their comeuppance. Starring *Anne Chapman. Directed by* Russ Meyer (40304043)

1.30 Sarah T: Portrait of a Teenage Alcoholic (TVM 1976) A young girl battles against her addiction to drink while struggling to cope with her parents' divorce. Starring Linda Blair. Directed by Richard Donner (1690983)

3.15 Wild Beauty (1946) Drama about an Indian boy fighting to save the horse he has befriended. Directed by Wallace Fox (9654208)

4.15 Night Stand (33705173)

4.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H (3321956)

5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (8053591)

PAY TV: SATELLITE, CABLE AND DIGITAL

● **For further listings see *Saturday's Vision***

SKY 1

6.00am Earthworm Jim (22975) **6.30** Count Duckula (21246) **9.00** The Simpsons (45826) **9.30** Garfield and Friends (49130) **10.00** Xena: Warrior Princess (66468) **11.00** The New Adventures of Superman (46804) **12.00pm** The Oprah Winfrey Show (62081) **1.00** Jenny Jones (48401) **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (80230) **3.00** Sarah: Surviving Life (77449) **4.00** Guilty! (89284) **5.00** Star Trek: Voyager (5807) **6.00** Married — With Children (8401) **6.30** Friends (3951) **7.00** Friends (6536) **7.30** The Simpsons (6265) **8.00** King of the Hill (5284) **8.30** Third Rock from the Sun (4791) **9.00** ER (94604) **10.00** *Hot Summer Down Under* (97791) **11.00** British Sex (10941) **1.00am** Long Play (8705598)

SKY BOX OFFICE

Sky's pay-per-view movie channels. To view any film telephone 0990-800888
SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 26) **Face/Off (1997)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60) **Home Alone 3 (1997)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 58) **George of the Jungle (1997)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 56) **Fathers' Day (1997)**

FILMFOUR

6.00pm A Room with a View (1985) (7640975) **8.00 Blue Juice (1994)** (95844062) **9.45** The Cutter (9310401) **10.00 Bitter Moon (1992)** (79016197) **12.20am Four Weddings and a Funeral (1994)** (1204208) **2.15 What's Eating Gilbert Grape? (1993)** (8054376) **4.10 Gregory's Girl (1980)** (4745579) **6.00** Close

SKY PREMIER

6.00am A Change of Heart (1997) (73517) ***8.00 The Incredible Journey*** (1963) (26352) **10.00 The Witches (1990)** (1963) (26352) **12.00pm A Change of Heart** (52604) ... **2.00 The Incredible Journey (1963)** (19913) **4.00 Jitters (1997)** (1081) **6.00 The Witches (1990)** (1997) (92509) **8.00 Fierce Creatures (1997)** (67474) **10.00 The English Patient (1996)** (85463975) **12.40am Diabolique (1996)** (306444) **2.30 *Rough Magic* (1995)** (602869) **4.10 Jitters (1997)** (583109)

SKY MOVIEMAX

6.00am Vanishing Point (1995) (50449) **7.30 Blue Rodeo (1996)** (33772) **9.00 Explorers (1985)** (15246) **11.00 Godzilla vs Gigan (1972)** (73062) **1.00pm Blue Rodeo (1996)** (19062) **3.00 Explorers (1985)** (30626) **5.00 Vanishing Point (1995)** (31623) **7.00** P-Review (1604) **7.30** UK Top 10 (1333) **8.00** Action Heroes: Arnold Schwarzenegger (4492) **8.30** Movie Magic: Body Building (6159) **9.00 Shadow Conspiracy (1997)** (43976401) **10.45 Hidden Agenda (1990)** (36771410) **12.35am The Package (1989)** (310269) **2.25 The Presidio (1988)** (33482?) **4.05 Maternal Instincts (1996)** (652937)

SKY CINEMA

4.00pm Champion (1949) (8387888) **6.00 The Pink Panther (1964)** (7758401) **8.00 The Nutty Professor (1963)** (7760246) **10.00 Madigan (1968)** (1845826) **11.45 Che! (1969)** (2941888) **1.25am Damien: Omen II (1978)** (8998208) **3.15** Hollywood Hall of Fame: **Burt Lancaster** (5226208) **3.45 The Yellow Canary (1943)** (28295111)

TNT

9.00pm *Show Boat* (1936) (40409710) **11.00 Singin' in the Rain (1952)** (21601536) **1.00am *Bandwagon* (1995)** (21652260) **3.00 Seven Brides for Seven Brothers (1954)** (34973228) **5.00** Close

SKY SPORTS 1

6.00am Super League **7.00** Sports Centre **8.00** Wrestling **9.00** Futbol Mundial **9.30** Soccer Extra: New Year Special **12.30pm** Football Special: *Goals and Bloopers* **2.00** Live Scottish Football **5.00** Boxing: Fights of 1998 **8.00** Soccer Extra: New Year Special **11.00** Scottish Football **12.30am** Boxing: *Fights of 1998* **3.30** Wrestling **5.30** H2O

SKY SPORTS 2

6.00am Fish TV **7.00** Aerobics **7.30** League Review **8.30** What A Weekend **9.00** Fish TV **10.00** The Rugby Club **11.00** Ice Hockey **1.30pm** Super League **2.30** Fish TV **3.30** Trans World Sport **4.30** What A Weekend **5.00** Live Darts: World Championship **11.00** H2O **11.30** Live International Cricket

SKY SPORTS 3

12.00pm Trans World Sport **1.00** Fish TV **2.00** Figure Skating **4.00** *The Rugby Club* **5.00** Survival of the Fittest **5.30** World Sport Special **6.00** Wild Spirits **6.30** H2O **7.00** Motorcycling **8.00** Figure Skating **10.00** Wrestling **12.00am** Close

EUROSPORT

7.30am Extreme Sports **8.30** Rally **10.00** Ski-Jumping **11.10** Live Women's Alpine Skiing **12.45pm** Football **1.45** Martial Arts **3.30** Women's Alpine Skiing **4.30** Ski-Jumping **6.30** Bloopers **7.00** Motorsports **8.00** *Tennis* **9.30** *Rally* **10.00** Ten-Pin Bowling **11.00** Extreme Sports **12.00am** Rally **12.30** Close

UK GOLD

7.00am Crossroads **7.30** Neighbours **7.55** EastEnders **8.30** The Bill **9.00** The Bill **9.30** Pride and Prejudice **10.30** Angels **11.00** Dallas **11.55** Neighbours **12.25pm** EastEnders **1.00** Pride and Prejudice **2.00** Dallas **2.55** The Bill **3.25** The Bill **3.55** EastEnders **4.30** Angels **4.55 FILM: Carry On at Your Convenience (1971)** **6.45** Only Fools and Horses **8.35** Porridge **9.30** Specially Selected Canned Carrott **10.25** Rising Damp **11.00** The Young Ones **2.55** Shopping with Screenshop

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am Within These Walls **7.00** On the Buses **7.30** The Fenn Street Gang **8.00** That's My Boy **8.30** Second Thoughts **9.00** Classic Coronation Street **9.30** Emmerdale **10.00** thirtysomething **11.00** Hawaii Five O **12.00pm** Classic Coronation Street **12.30** Emmerdale **1.00** Nearest and Dearest **1.30** Watching **2.00** thirtysomething **3.00** The Love Boat **5.00** Hawaii Five O **6.00** The Professionals **8.00** The Love Boat **10.00** Jokers Wild **10.30** Jokers Wild **11.00** Granada Men and Motors

CARLTON SELECT [CABLE]

5.00pm *What's Cooking?* **5.30** Gridlock **6.00** London Bridge **6.30** Rising Damp **7.00** Boon **8.00** Blue Heelers **9.00** Love Hurts **10.00** That's Love **10.30** The Screen **11.00 FILM: Blood Sport (aka Dick Francis' Blood Sport) (TVM 1989)** **1.00am** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected **2.00** Close

DISNEY CHANNEL

6.00am Bear in the Big Blue House **6.25** Classic Toons **6.35** Gummi Bears **7.00** Classic Toons **7.10** Aladdin **7.35** Timon and *Pumbaa* **8.00** *101 Dalmatians* **8.25** *Classic* Toons **8.30** Hercules: The TV Show **9.00** Art Attack **9.15** *Ned's Newt* **9.30** *Recess* **9.45** Pepper Ann **10.00** Boy Meets World **10.30** Smart Guy **11.00** Teen Angel **11.30** Flash Forward **12.00pm** Doug **12.30** Dinosaurs **1.00 FILM: Muppet Treasure Island (1996)** **2.35** *New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh* **3.00** The Little Mermaid **3.30** Timon and Pumbaa **3.45** 101 Dalmatians **4.10** Hercules: The TV Show **4.40** Art Attack **5.00** Smart Guy **5.30** Recess **5.45** Pepper Ann **6.00** The Wonder Years **6.30** Boy Meets World **7.00** Honey, I Shrunk the Kids: The TV Show **7.50** Classic Toons **8.00 FILM: Borrowed Hearts (1997)** **9.30** Home Improvement **10.00** Dinosaurs **10.30** The Wonder Years **11.00** Touched by an Angel **12.00am** Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK

6.00am Power Rangers Turbo **6.30** Power Rangers Turbo **7.00** Mortal Kombat **7.25** Oggy and the Cockroaches **7.30** *Donkey Kong Country* **8.00** Goosebumps **8.25** Sam and Max **8.35** Spiderman **9.00** X-Men **9.25** Fantastic Four **9.50** The Incredible Hulk **10.15** Casper **10.30** Oggy and the Cockroaches **10.55** The Mouse and The *Monster* **11.05** Eek! Stravaganza **11.30** Life with Louie **11.55** Home to Rent **12.05pm** Sam and Max **12.30** Donkey Kong Country **1.00** Mowgli: The New Adventures of Jungle Book **1.25** Ace Ventura **1.50** Spiderman **2.15** X-Men **2.40** Fantastic Four **3.05** The Incredible Hulk **3.30** Roy and Lisa's Big Ride **3.35** Mortal Kombat **4.00** Spiderman **4.25** Mowgli: The New Adventures of Jungle Book **4.50** Home to Rent **5.00** Goosebumps **5.25** Eerie, Indiana: The Other Dimension **5.50** Oggy and the Cockroaches **6.55** Donkey Kong Country **6.25** Sam and Max **6.50** Eek! Stravaganza **7.00** Close

NICKELODEON

6.00am Fraggle Rock **6.30** Muppet Babies **7.00** Kenan and Kel **1.30pm** The Journey of Allen Strange **2.00** The Secret World of Alex Mack **2.30** Kenan and Kel **3.00** Clarissa Explains it All **3.30** *Kablam!* **4.00** *Hey Arnold!* **4.30** Rugrats **5.00** Sister Sister **5.30** Kenan and Kel **6.00** Sabrina the Teenage Witch **6.30** The Journey Of Allen Strange **7.00** Close



The Australian spinner Shane Warne, who has been recalled for the final Test against England in Sydney (Sky Sports 2, 11.30pm)

TROUBLE

7.00am Hollyoaks **7.30** USA High **8.00** *Saved by the Bell: The New Class* **8.30** Hang Time **9.00** Saved by the Bell: Wedding in Las Vegas **11.00** Sweet Valley High **11.30** Ready or Not **12.00pm** The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air **12.30** In the House **1.00** On A Mission **1.30** Smash Hits Poll Winners Party 1998 **3.00** Saved by the Bell: The New Class **3.30** USA High **4.00** The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air **4.30** In the House **5.00** Saved by the Bell: The New Class **5.30** Sweet Valley High **6.00** Hang Time **6.30** Movies, Games and Videos **7.00** USA High **9.45** What a Life **12.00am** Close

CHALLENGE TV

5.00pm Crosswits **5.30** Challenge Prize Time **5.45** Family Fortunes **6.15** Challenge Prize Time **6.30** Catchphrase **7.00** Challenge Prize Time **7.15** 100 Per Cent **7.45** Challenge Prize Time **7.55** The Crystal Maze **9.00** Challenge Prize Time **9.15** Strike it Lucky **9.45** Challenge Prize Time **10.00** Endurance UK **10.30** Challenge Prize Time **10.45** The Cooler **11.15** Challenge Prize Time **11.30** Carnal Knowledge **12.30am** Love at First Sight **1.00** Strike it Lucky **1.30** Through the Keyhole **2.00** Karaoke Challenge **2.30** Family Fortunes **3.00** Endurance UK **3.30** Stockbusters **4.00** Fifteen-to-One **4.30** Give Us a Clue **5.00** *Screenshop*

BRAVO

8.00pm Real Stories of the Highway Patrol *8.30 Bushido 9.00 L.A.P.D. 9.30 Cops* **10.00** Extreme Championship Wrestling **10.30** Scary Sex **11.00 FILM: Natural Born Killers (1994)** **1.15am FILM: Menace II Society (1993)** **3.15 FILM: Angel Heart (1987)** **5.30** Freaky Stories **6.00** Close

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7.00pm Clueless **7.30** Desmond's **8.00** Roseanne **8.30** Just Shoot Me **9.00** Cybill **9.30** Seinfeld **10.00 FILM: Mystic Pizza (1988)** **12.00am** Late Night with David Letterman **1.00** Taxi **1.30** The Critic **2.00** Dr Katz **2.30** Soap **3.00** Wings **3.30** Nightstand **4.00** Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

SATELLITE: 8pm-MIDNIGHT ONLY

8.00am Sightings **9.00** Battlestar Galactica **10.00** Quantum Leap **11.00** Dark Shadows **11.30** The Ray Bradbury Theatre **12.00pm** The Twilight Zone **12.30** The Twilight Zone **1.00** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30** Tales of *the Unexpected* **2.00** *Miracles* **3.00** Battlestar Galactica **4.00** Amazing Stories **4.30** Mysteries, Magic and Miracles **5.00** Sightings **6.00** The Ray Bradbury Theatre **6.30** New Alfred Hitchcock **7.00** Quantum Leap **8.00** Amazing Stories **8.30** Highlander: The Raven **9.30** The Hunger **10.00 FILM: Flash Gordon (1980)** **12.00am FILM: Heavy Metal (1981)** **1.45** *Sci-Focus* **2.00** *The Guyver* **2.30** *100 Years of Horror* **3.00** The Twilight Zone **3.30** Dark Shadows **4.00** Close

HOME & LEISURE

6.00am Australia's Strangest Home Improvements **9.25** The Home and Leisure House **9.30** Australia's Strangest Home Improvements **2.00** The House Auction

DISCOVERY

4.00pm Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures **4.30** Walker's World **5.00** Connections 2 by James Burke **5.30** Jurassica **6.00** Animal Doctor **6.30** Great White! **7.30** Beyond 2000 **8.00** The Barefoot Bushman **9.00** Tan Wars **9.30** Supplies **10.00** Zulu Messengers **10.30** Blood and Guts **11.00** The Golden Girls **11.30** Time to Cull **12.00am** Myths of Mankind: The Flood **1.00** Connections 2 by James Burke **1.30** Ancient Warriors **2.00** Close

ANIMAL PLANET

12.00pm Wild Sanctuaries **12.30** The Blue Wilderness **1.00** Animal Doctor **1.30** Australia Wild **2.00** Wildlife Rescue **2.30** Human/Nature **3.30** Harry's Practice **4.00** Jack Hanna's Zoo Life **4.30** Wildlife SOS **5.00** Pet Rescue **5.30** Australia Wild **6.00** The New Adventures of Black Beauty **6.30** Lassie **7.00** Rediscovery of the World: Marquesas Islands **8.00** Animal Doctor *8.30 Animal X 9.00 Ocean Wilds* **9.30** Emergency Vets **10.00** Superhuman **10.30** Vet School **11.30** Emergency Vets **12.00am** Close

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

7.00pm The Shark Files: Shark Attack Files **8.00** The Shark Files: Legends of the Killer Sharks **9.00** *The Shark Files: Shark Shooters* **10.00** The Shark Files: Operation Shark Attack **11.00** The Shark Files: Sharks of the Red Triangle **12.00am** The Shark Files: Sharks of Pirate Island

HISTORY

4.00pm Battletime: Burma **4.30** Victory at Sea: The Turkey Shoot **5.00** Deep Sea Exploration **6.00** Hidden Cities of the Etruscans **7.00** Future Weapons **7.30** Haunted History: Legacy of the Battle of Little Bighorn

CARLTON FOOD [CABLE]

9.00am Food Network Daily **9.30** Food for Thought **10.00** First Taste **10.30** Worrall Thompson Cooks **11.00** What's Cooking? **11.30** Coron's Kitchen College **12.00pm** Food Network Daily **12.30** Newman Meals **1.00** Food for Thought **1.30** An Umbrian Kitchen **2.00** Can't Stand the Heat **2.30** Food Network Daily **3.00** For Better for Worse **3.30** Coron's Kitchen College **4.00** New Chefs on the Block **4.30** Tessa Bramley's Country Kitchen **5.00** Close

LIVING

6.00am Dig and Arabella Nursery Rhymes *6.10 Alfred J Kwak* ***6.30*** *Tiny and Crew '98* **6.35** Polka Dot Shorts **6.50** See How They Grow **7.00** Practical Parenting **7.05** Professor Bubble **7.30** Caillou **7.35** Bug Alert **7.55** Practical Parenting **8.00** Barney and Friends **8.25** Polka Dot Shorts **8.35** Tiny and Crew **8.50** Practical Parenting **9.00** The Roseanne Show **9.50** The Jerry Springer Show **10.40** Michael Cole **11.30** The Heat is On **12.00pm** Special Babies **12.30** Rescue 911 **1.00** Ready, Steady, Cook **1.35** Can't Cook, Won't Cook **2.10** The Jerry Springer Show **3.00 FILM: People Will Talk (1951)** **5.00** Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction **5.35** Can't Cook, Won't Cook **6.10** The Jerry Springer Show **7.00** Rescue 911 **7.30** Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction **8.00** *Murder Call* ***9.00 FILM: Buried Secrets (1996)*** **11.30** Sex Life Down Under **12.00am** Close

ZEE TV

5.30am Music Time **6.00** Sony Mon Lorry **6.30** Mast Mast Show **7.00** Faith **7.30** News **8.00** Ghoomta Aaina **8.30** Saaeeb **9.00** Achiwar **10.00** *Anhoni* ***11.00*** *Zaike Ka Safar* **11.30** Parampara **12.00pm FILM: Hindi Movie: Basera** **3.00** Kaachi Dhoop **3.30** Top Ten **5.30** Amanat **6.00** Knock Knock *Kaun Hai* ***6.30*** *Zee and You Special* **7.00** Chaamu Baddoor **8.00** News **8.30** Aashirvad **9.00** Meet the Stars **12.00am** News **12.30** Ru-Ba-Ru **1.00** X-Zone **2.00 FILM: Hindi Movie: Parampara**



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Hewitt's tough line as IFAs face fines

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Michael Clark tells how Colt cantered home



BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY JANUARY 1 1999

Solitaire on traders' day of the Triffids

Martin Waller reports from a party snubbed by the host in a half-empty Square Mile

There is an arresting scene in the science fiction novel *The Day of the Triffids* when a man, blindfolded and hospital-bound, awakes to discover that what should be a normal Thursday sounds, from the eerie lack of traffic noise outside, more like a quiet Sunday.

Yesterday was Triffid Day in the City. No giant vegetables bowling down Threadneedle Street — but on a day when the City should have been open for business, or at least for frantic last-minute preparations for the birth of the euro, few were at work — and the signs were that they were merely going through the motions.

The lights were on in almost every building, yet by midday the pubs and wine bars were fuller than the average office. The banks were open, the shops were trading. Was it Thursday, or was it Sunday?

In the macho culture of the financial community, of course, long hours must be seen to be worked whether or not the actual minutes are productive. So institutions will have felt they had to field staff.

This was despite the dubious decree from the Stock Exchange that the potential confusion surrounding the euro-Nativity meant that all equities trading should terminate at noon on Wednesday.

Then there were the Nativity preparations themselves. These provided justification for fielding further teams of ghost workers. But the fact is that any serious structural preparations not done by now have been left too late.

The computer software will already be in place. The biggest job left will be to convert the existing balances in the so-called legacy currencies, the mark, the franc and the rest, into euros.

This can only take place now the currency conversion rates are known, which is why an estimated 30,000 people will be at work in the Square Mile today and at the weekend, about a tenth of the normal workforce. Some will have been in yesterday, but the mass of the conversion work will be done nearer to Monday's start of trading.

So there was an air of unreality in the Square Mile, a place half deserted and half full of people, many of whom had no real idea why they were there. One institution admitted that most of its workers would be going home after lunch. Others were less candid, even if it was questionable how many of those lunchtime drinkers would return to their desks. The unreality was appropriate, because euro-weekend is the party the City threw but Britain stayed away from, the Eurovision Song Contest that we hosted but did not enter.

London will be the main trading centre for the euro, but Britain has stayed out. The rumours are widespread that at least one big continental bank, probably French, is seriously underprepared. If they are true, we will probably know by the end of next week when the trades done have to be settled. Because of the huge sums involved, the consequences could be serious. But the rumours give rise to chauvinistic mirth rather than any real concern.

Furthermore, many of these City workers who may or may not be going through the motions know that they are living on borrowed time. The consultants on euro-work will find jobs in millennium bug control, but the City is braced for thousands of job losses in the new year, most announced but as yet unimplemented.

One vignette. At a big City institution, in a room more crowded than most, just minutes after the conversion rates were announced from Brussels, a knot of people are transfixed by their computer screens. Draw closer, though. They are all playing Solitaire.

Markets take euro switch in their stride

By Alasdair Murray, Economics Correspondent

EUROPEAN central banks breathed a sigh of relief yesterday as the final act of converting national currencies into euros passed off without a hitch.

While the European Commission unveiled the final conversion rates amid great pomp and ceremony in Brussels, the markets were more concerned with pressing ahead with systems revisions before the first day of real trading on Monday.

Central banks had been on full alert in case currency speculation required last-minute intervention to restore parities between the euro zone currencies.

The Irish punt and the Italian lira had been regarded as potentially vulnerable because both currencies have previously strayed from their exchange-rate mechanism central parities which European leaders had decided in May would provide the basis for conversion.

There was also concern that sterling volatility could create problems because the pound is a member of the notional ecu currency basket — used by the European Commission to establish the final euro conversion rates — although it has not joined the single currency.

Before conversion the pound fell two pfennigs to DM2.7724 in its final trading session against the mark, but the decline was insufficient to push conversion rates far from market expectations. Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the French Finance Minister, admitted that the pound's recent decline had resulted in a slightly stronger than expected franc to euro conversion rate.

Claudio Piron, treasury economist at Standard Chartered, said: "The currency market response may seem bizarre — the atmosphere could be described as moribund for such a historic event." But Mr Piron said the lack of reaction was a positive sign that "the whole operation was carried out well", with the euro zone countries gently pushing the markets towards their stated conversion goal.

The few traders at their desks did have the option of conducting indirect trade in the euro, using the ecu, which was due to convert into the euro at a rate of one to one at midnight. There was a brief flurry as traders moved from the dollar to the ecu, pushing up the effective value of the euro from the official conversion rate of \$1.1685 to \$1.1720.

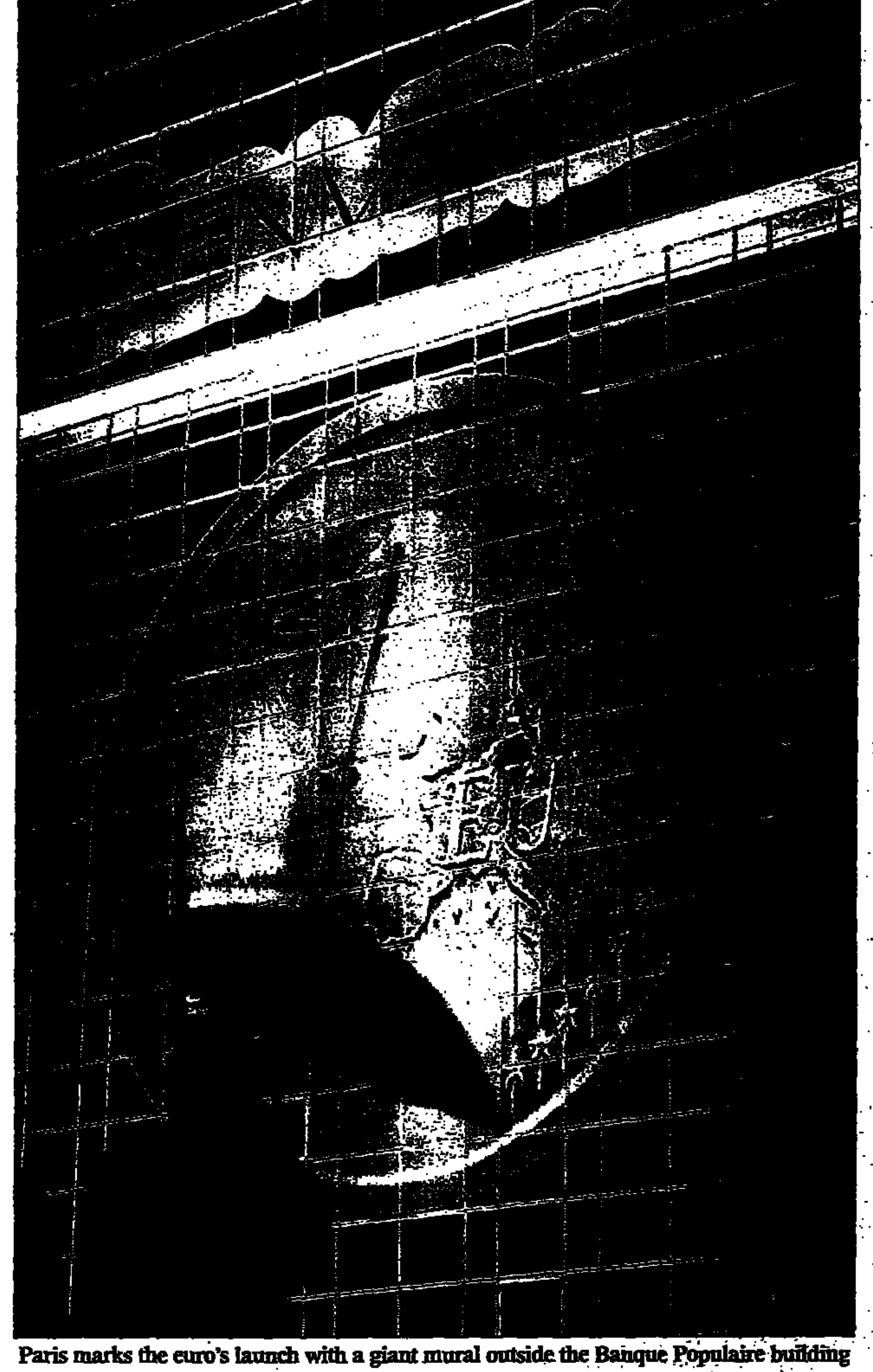
The pound also slipped slightly from an initial value of 70.55p to the euro to 70.63p by the end of the day. Traders admitted, however, that there was uncertainty as to the precise value at which the euro will open trade on Monday, with banks offering quotes ranging from \$1.1664 to \$1.1728.

While the markets were quiet the policy battle over the future of the European Central Bank continued. Oskar Lafontaine, the German Finance Minister, again dropped a strong hint that he wants the ECB to begin cutting rates to help to reduce unemployment. Wim Duisenberg, ECB President, warned European governments on Wednesday that lower interest rates will not prove a panacea for high unemployment and called on European leaders to undertake structural reforms.

Mr Duisenberg yesterday said he would make no further comments on his tenure at the ECB after France accused him of reneging on a promise to make way for a French ECB President halfway through his allotted eight-year term.

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MAL LANGSDON / REUTERS



Paris marks the euro's launch with a giant mural outside the Banque Populaire building

Lord Mayor fights to keep City in the money

By Carl Mortished, International Business Editor

LONDON is stepping up its campaign to prevent the City from losing its pre-eminence as Europe's financial centre.

Lord Levene of Portsoken, the Lord Mayor and the chairman of Bankers Trust International, will visit key financial decision-makers on a whistle-stop tour of Frankfurt, Paris, Milan, Madrid, Amsterdam and Brussels. The initiative coincides with the launch of the euro as the City ponders the risk that money market business might be lost to Frankfurt and Paris.

The Lord Mayor will ask politicians and bankers not to view the market rivalry as a narrow national contest. "If Europe loses the asset that London represents, we will never regain it," he said.

Lord Levene said he was confident that London would take the lion's share of trade in the euro, even if Britain remained outside. "London is almost extraterritorial. We do more trade in the dollar than anyone else despite the fact that the UK is not in the dollar zone." City banks account for about 30 per cent of trade in the dollar and 28 per cent of trade in the mark.

However, continental banks have already mounted a challenge to the pre-eminence of London in setting euro lending rates. The European Banking Federation is sponsoring Euribor, an index of interbank lending rates to rival Euro-Libor, sponsored by the British Bankers' Association.

According to Will Mason, BBA director, Euribor was designed to replace domestic interbank offer rates and he believes that continental countries balked at setting a rate for the euro in London. "To begin with, Euribor will be used by banks in the euro zone."

The European Banking Federation yesterday said that Euribor was based on 57 banks, whereas Euro-Libor was just 16 banks in London. A spokesman said: "Euro-Libor only reflects the London market and most of them are Anglo-Saxon banks. We wanted to have a rate reflecting market value, not just what is happening in London."

Nicholas Boncke, secretary-general, said: "As far as the Paris bank market is concerned, the bulk of deals will be linked to Euribor.

However, Mr Mason believes that counter-parties will ultimately seek the keenest rate, and so far, London's Euro-Libor has set a rate several basis points below Euribor. The competition will be keenest in the futures market and both Eurex and London's Liffe are hedging their bets: offering futures products based on Euribor and Euro-Libor rates.

Target hopes to hit the bull's eye

By Dominic Walsh

ONE of the pressure points on Monday morning, when euro trading begins, will be Target, the system for processing large, cross-border euro payments, which goes live at 6am GMT.

Target (Trans-European Automated Real-time Gross settlement Express Transfer system) has been developed by the European Central Bank and the national banks of the 15 EU member states and is based in Frankfurt, the home of the ECB.

Target, which will operate for 11 hours each working day, will be a real-time system. This means that payments will reach their destination within a couple of minutes. The speed of the transactions and volume capacity should make log-jams unlikely.

The ECB has granted access to Target to national central banks outside the 11 euro countries provided they have real-time gross settlement (RTGS) systems operating in the euro. Any UK payments to or from other countries through Target will be handled by the Bank of England.

In effect, the Bank will act as an interface between Target and the banks that own and run Chaps (clearing house automated payment system), the UK's wholesale payments system that handles an average of 70,000 sterling transactions a day, worth £150 billion. Although the capacity of Target as it relates to the UK has not been revealed, the Bank of England said it was likely to be "larger still" than the CHAPS sterling capacity of 135,000 transactions a day.

But despite the complexity of implementing such a system, the ECB is adamant that it is as safe as it is possible for it to be. It points out that testing on Target started in June 1997, and included a six-month simulation period involving hundreds of hours of tests of every component. Hundreds of credit institutions took part, culminating in a volume test on November 28 when almost 100,000 test payments were processed during normal business hours.

The ECB said: "Each national central bank participating in Target has a full back-up system to ensure that — with the exception of unforeseen disasters — its processing capacity will never be out of action for more than one hour during any single working day."

Bradford & Bingley braced for attack by carpetbaggers

By Caroline Merrell



Rodrigues: fan of mutuality

BRADFORD & BINGLEY, the UK's second-biggest building society, faces an attempt by carpetbaggers to force it to convert to a bank and pay windfalls to 2.5 million people.

The conversion campaign is being led by Stephen Major, a quantity surveyor from Lisburn, Co Antrim. Mr Major has submitted a resolution on conversion to the society, and is planning to stand for election to the board. His attempt is being backed by 50 members of the society. For the resolution to be valid, the 50 members must have been with the society for at least two years and have had minimum savings and mortgages during that period.

The challenge comes only months after Nationwide, the UK's biggest building society, defeated an attempt by Michael Hardern, a freelance butler, to force the society to convert. Mr Hardern also tried to stand for the board of Bradford & Bingley, but his application failed because some of his 50 backers did not have the right qualifications. Nationwide managed to defeat Mr Hardern by only about 30,000 votes from a total of 2.2 million votes cast.

The £22 billion Bradford & Bingley is headed by Christopher Rodrigues, a staunch defender of mutuality. The society's discounting on mortgages and higher savings rates has helped to boost its asset size.

If Mr Major's conversion resolution is passed at the society's annual meeting in April, then a formal vote would have to take place. In the conversions of Halifax, Alliance & Leicester, Woolwich and Northern Rock members voted overwhelmingly in favour, with millions of people netting windfalls averaging between £1,000 and £2,000.

The start to business in the new year for the Bradford & Bingley is set to be marred by a bout of conversion speculation, as it is still possible to open an account with the society with as little as £500 and benefit from any conversion windfall.

Yesterday, Yorkshire Building Society confirmed that Mr Hardern intended to stand for election to its board to propose the society take immediate steps to convert to a bank.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 1603

ACROSS
1 Wool-winding stick (7)
5 20 ac —, Gray's country churchyard (5)
8 Wakeful night (5)
9 Incorporate (in greater whole) (7)
10 Grassland; straight track (3)
11 Exactness (9)
12 Idiomatic expression (6)
14 Himalayan guide (6)
17 Performers' entrance (5,4)
18 Miserable (3)
19 Wide area, stretch (7)
20 Fuel (fire) (5)
21 Eskimo canoe (5)
22 Burial mound (7)

DOWN
1 Grow to maturity (7)
2 Soft and wet (5)
3 Sicken (3)
4 Nurse, encourage (6)
5 Book issuer (9)
6 More showy (7)
7 Coil of yarn (5)
11 Boris —, *Zhivago* author (9)
13 Try again (for job) (7)
15 Where one lives (7)
16 Big wood (6)
17 Tale-teller (5)
18 Tape-winding reel (5)
20 Total (3)

SOLUTION TO NO 1602
ACROSS: 1 Challenger 9 Element 10 Louis 11 Vice 12 Subpoena 14 Normal 15 Rigged 18 Octavian 20 Gash 22 Brawl 23 Utopian 24 Disjointed
DOWN: 2 Heel 3 Litmus 4 Ellipsis 5 Gouge 6 Rise and shine 7 Heaven forbid 8 Mercer 13 Malvolio 16 Gratis 17 Saturn 19 Teams 21 Lore

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